ABSTRACT

Leila Kayed. REINVENTING HOW TEACHERS AND LEADERS CO-GENERATE EQUITABLE EVALUATION PRACTICES FOR TEACHER GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (Under the direction of Dr. Matthew Militello). Department of Educational Leadership, May 2021.

Teacher evaluation practices are often *pro forma* processes that offer those evaluated little opportunity for professional growth and development. Using a participatory action research (PAR) design, I engaged teachers and instructional leaders in a process to revamp evaluation procedures for English language teachers in an international bilingual school with the goal of improving pedagogical practices and teacher collaboration. The research team conducted two cycles of inquiry that led to a new, jointly produced evaluation process that incorporated evidence-based observations and post-observation conversation. Teachers actively participated in restructuring the evaluation model and identified their professional development needs. Satisfaction with the new approach was widespread. However, external factors partially undermined the success of the initiative: changes in the school’s leadership structure had an adverse effect by derailing the cooperative space that the redesign project had generated. Diligent work in small groups may not be sufficient to overcome structural obstacles. However, the PAR project developed components that may be replicable in other multicultural or international school settings.

REINVENTING HOW TEACHERS AND LEADERS CO-GENERATE EQUITABLE EVALUATION PRACTICES FOR TEACHER GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is devotedly dedicated to the memory of my loving mother, Patricia Skinner. Her strength, wit, and activism for her faith will always inspire me, and her words will forever be on my mind and in my heart.

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All praises are due to the Almighty, the Merciful, the All-Beneficent, whose Grace and Blessings have enabled me to complete this milestone. I would like to thank my father, my husband, my Aunt Bouran, my children—Tariq, Hamza, Noor, Sarah, and Jenna—my sisters Dina and Sakina, and my brothers Salman and Mohammad for supporting me with love and dedicated partnership for success in my life.

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English is the *lingua franca* of the world; hence, the global number of English language learners continues to increase substantially year after year and is estimated to exceed 1.9 billion by 2020 (British Council, 2013). As a result, English language learning is a large-scale concern that school communities worldwide are attempting to address. The participatory action research (PAR) study had the potential to be significant for the school in which the PAR project took place and possibly for a larger audience of international educators to address the lack of equitable academic support for students who are learning English and more importantly for teachers charged with providing it.

The participatory action research (PAR) study took place at a private nonprofit international school, the International Academy (IA), located in Amman, Jordan, that offers American, British, or International Baccalaureate programs and promises a strong foundation in the English language. The study engaged English teachers in redesigning a more meaningful teacher evaluation process for improving practices that include all levels of language development. I begin this chapter with a description of the focus of practice explaining the rationale for the PAR study and making connections to issues of equity that emerged in our school conversations about the teacher evaluation process. To further investigate the focus of practice, I explored the macro, meso and micro levels of the assets and challenges related to the PAR study. Then, I clarify the purpose of the study and present the research questions and theory of action. I also address contextual considerations, which are explained in detail in Chapter 3. Finally, I summarize the roles of the primary and secondary drivers or key players and end with study limitations.

Focus of Practice

The focus of practice for the PAR project and study was to engage three English teachers and two administrators at the International Academy (IA) in re-imagining a more meaningful teacher evaluation process centered on improving teacher practices at all levels of language development. The PAR gives special attention to the needs of teachers who teach English language learners and to the implementation of an improved evaluation process to support the professional learning needs of individuals and the group (Paryani, 2019; Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). As an instructional leader who has taught a foreign language for over two decades, I had not used an evaluation process that supported the precise needs of English teachers. Thus, the PAR offers an opportunity to explore how to better engage teachers in a growth and development model of evaluation. In offering a rationale for the PAR study, I highlight the connection between equitable access and learning for ELL students in the school context. Then, I identify the assets and challenges in the current school context at the micro (school level), meso (organizational level) and macro (structural level) contexts.

Rationale for the PAR

As an instructional leader in an international bilingual school, all teacher evaluations I have encountered are checklists or assessments of what a teacher can do or what a teacher knows; we evaluators record notes and evidence to judge a teacher's overall performance (Toch & Rothman, 2008). The process is a *pro forma* evaluation based on evaluators' pre-established processes that meet the school or district evaluation norms; they are ostensibly designed for teacher improvement, but in fact are no more than routine, bureaucratic processes (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). Teachers rarely have input or voice in the evaluation process. One goal was to enable teacher voices in making decisions based on collaborative conversations about practice.

In the PAR, I relied on the insights of a Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) group at the school; the group of two leaders and three teachers were closely involved with the work of English language learning, the focus for the PAR process. The rationale for the CPR was rooted in the principle that "[i]mprovement research is a focused learning journey. The overall goal is to develop the necessary know-how for a reform idea ultimately to spread faster and more effectively" (Bryk et al., 2015, p. 8). The educators who agreed to be a part of the project were passionate and serious about embarking on a journey of school improvement and supported the idea of using the teacher evaluation process as leverage to support changing teacher practices for ELL students. More detailed descriptions of the participants are in Chapter 3 describing the context of the project in further detail.

After conducting conversations with the CPR group using informal Community Learning Exchanges (CLE) processes, we discussed what meaningful evaluation processes should include. A strong evaluation system that is helpful to teachers does not record observational notes to draw conclusions and decide what teachers know and can do; rather, the tool should use evidence to initiate conversations with teachers (Acheson & Gall, 2003; Glickman, 2002). We embedded a comprehensive evaluation tool in a coaching strategy that helped teachers decide on how to improve their practice (Costa et al., 2016; Knight, 2009); teachers engaged in decisions and undertook the responsibility for their growth and development (Spillane & Coldren, 2011). Finally, we used tools that enabled the two instructional leaders and me to become different kinds of observers, observers who use evidence to initiate conversations with teachers that could, in turn, initiate a change in practice. By practicing more equitable leadership by including teachers in the design process, we modeled equitable practices for them to use with students.

Connections to Equitable Access and Learning for Students

The following questions connected to issues of equity emerged in our preliminary conversations at the school and led to discussing the use of equity frameworks for the teacher evaluation process:

- Are teachers treating students appropriately according to their English language skill levels?
- Given that most IA students are English language learners, were English teachers engaging all voices in the classroom?
- What kind of feedback or knowledge is needed to engage all students in the classroom?
- How often did students have a chance to practice speaking English?
- How did Heads of Departments (HODs) help improve teachers' focus on English language acquisition in the classroom?

The CPR group agreed that a meaningful evaluation process for English teachers could help them understand and purposefully apply the following theories to their practices:

- theories in second language acquisition such as the sociocultural theory and second language development;
- Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal Development (ZPD) for teaching and learning English as a second language and its application in a bilingual setting;
- importance of interaction in the second language and developing students' oral language and voice in the second language (Hale, 2008; Herschensohn & Young-Scholten, 2013).

- language performance phases or stages before competence in a classroom setting (Robertson & Ford, n.d.);
- international and national curriculum standards to inform language teaching and learning at IA.

I examine in Chapter 2 how these theories and pedagogies were important in the PAR study. A meaningful evaluation process helps the instructional leader observe practices in the classroom and analyze what both learners and the teachers are doing. Using selective verbatim quotations, the researcher can code the observational notes with a different purpose, that is, to initiate a reciprocal conversation with the teacher rather than issue judgments about what is happening in the classroom. In the supervisory role as the observer, I should ask the teacher better questions, questions that lead to better practice, and give the teacher voice rather than tell the teachers what they already know and describe how they teach. Buckingham and Goodall (2019) suggest that "telling people what we think of their performance doesn't help them thrive and excel and telling people how we think they should improve actually hinders learning" (p. 2).

Traditionally, instructional leaders have been conditioned to write reports using constructive language to the best of their ability, but in most cases such reports cause great frustration and cause teachers to disengage from a meaningful process for growth. In the PAR project and study, we focused on changing that process from an audit or inspection checklist model to an inquiry model that co-investigates teacher practices with the teacher.

The PAR outcome was intended to co-generate a comprehensive process that is personally useful and of value to teachers and leaders to help them shift their pedagogical practices. A meaningful evaluation process would help the leader observe with the intention of having evidence-based conversations with teachers and supporting them to set instructional goals for changes in their practices. We accomplished this by careful attention to the school's context, including both assets and challenges to our study.

Assets and Challenges

A fishbone tool helped us analyze the assets and challenges in the specific context in which the PAR took place (see Figure 1). The fishbone is used in the improvement sciences to uncover the root causes of the intended focus of practice (Bryk et al., 2015). I explored the micro, meso, and macro levels of the assets and challenges related to the PAR project (Rosenthal, 2019). The micro level is the close group of the CPR team. The meso is at the institutional level of our full school and the organization of 11 schools of which we are a part. Largely hierarchical, the organization is typically not open to change at the individual school level. The macro level is the country level (Jordan), and because the MOE was investigating K–12 teacher evaluation, this countrywide initiative initially energized the project. The following describes the micro, meso, and macro level with more detail.

Micro Level

The micro level was synonymous with the CPR team. The team members had diverse experience and expertise: two members were in leadership positions, and three were teachers. The experience in the CPR team ranged from eight to 20 years of teaching and/or administration. Their experience was an asset to this project as it enriched the PAR data with first-hand insight and knowledge about the process of evaluation at IA. The CPR team members were eager to embark on a journey of learning and were excited about the opportunity to be part of a new initiative that will impact the school.

Meso Level

At the meso level of our school, traditional staff meetings and professional development

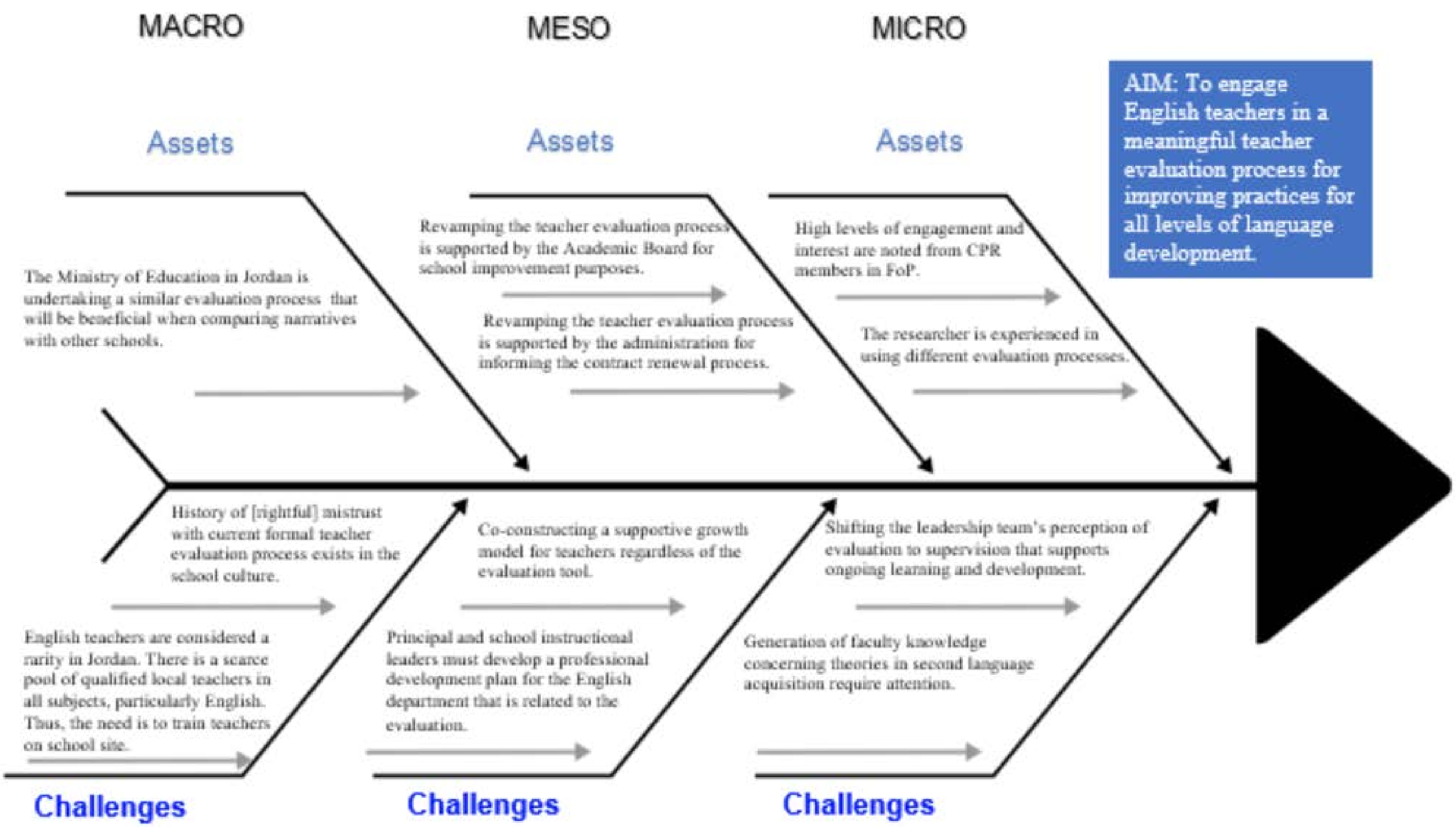


Figure 1. An analysis of micro, meso and macro assets and challenges.

opportunities took place weekly; however, because the administration mandated the themes and agendas driving the meetings, they were not geared towards addressing common instructional patterns observed during classroom visits. By and large, although the teachers with whom I discussed the PAR project were eager to learn and change, the faculty and administrators had used a certain kind of evaluation for many years. Their beliefs and practices about teaching English did not always comport with new research.

At the meso level of the entire school organization, IA for many years had maintained a systematic teacher evaluation based on a hierarchical model, and the feedback regarding evaluation typically used judgmental, deficit language. The leadership team was committed to bringing needed change to the current teacher evaluation form, the non-participating vice principals were also on board even though they were not part of the CPR team. We expected to be able to share what we learned at the micro level in the CPR group with others at the school.

As stated, the IA teacher evaluation tool was *pro forma* (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). The current checklist had specific criteria that the principal, vice principal, and Heads of Departments (HODs) used to gather information from a few visits to make judgements about what teachers know and can do. IA was established in 1947, and the teacher evaluation process was first drafted in the 1980s and had been revised since; however, it was in need of revision in alignment with new efforts to change the General Framework for Curriculum and Assessment in Jordan.

As School Principal for the British International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) program, I was responsible for the evaluation and professional development of over 25 English Language teachers. Like all assistant principals and department heads (HODs), I was expected to complete an evaluation for each teacher in their school section or department with no input from the teacher. The Human Resources department expected a checklist summary per teacher at the end of each term for renewal purposes; the evaluation was tied to an incentives system, which caused countless struggles and frustrations. The administration's response was to give all staff a 2% to 5% annual increase in salary depending on the performance for the past year.

Typically, the principal, vice principal, and heads of departments observed each teacher in the fall and then again in the spring. The teacher chose the lesson goals, decided on activities and evidence if the observer requested them, and had a mid-year and end-of-year conference with the head of department. Although a general time frame for visits was known in advance, the specific date and time might not be announced; this contributed to the impression that the visits were audits for renewal purposes and not for systematic teacher support.

Macro Level

At the macro level, IA recognized that the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Jordan was undertaking a similar evaluation improvement process, as the revamping of the entire evaluation protocol was underway for all content areas and grade levels. While that might be beneficial when comparing narratives of improvement with the MOE initiative, more typically teacher evaluation processes at national or state levels remained focused on teacher standards and metrics, a bureaucratic process that served to systematize but not typically to support the growth and learning of teachers. However, we recognized that we had to adapt our processes to fit the national model. This scenario both gave us leverage to carry out the PAR but might also present a challenge as our ideas about the evaluation process may be different from the national model.

The Jordanian MOE was experiencing a similar dilemma as it had asked its education directorates to fill the annual performance evaluation form with the same mechanism as in previous years. The announcement by the Minister of Education, Dr. Omar Razzaz, to the directors of education in this regard in April 2018 provided no additional guidance to the schools at that time. There was no requirement as yet for teachers in the Kingdom to be certified or to attain any academic prerequisite other than a bachelor's degree in the subject they were teaching. However, the Ministry does weigh in on teacher evaluation standards.

The MOE announced that it had been working for nine months in partnership with the teachers' union to prepare a different system for practicing the profession of education in Jordan, and a newly invented path for teachers was also scheduled to be instituted then or to be worked on during the year in 2021. The new track included criteria for evaluating performance, which, in turn, influenced incentives and allowances and contributed to teachers' professional development. In 2020, this project took a sudden turn for the worse as the Teachers Syndicate headquarters in Amman and 11 of its branches across the country were shut down and all 13 syndicate board members were arrested on July 25, 2020. This put a halt to any improvement efforts concerning teacher evaluation that were in progress. Thus, the changes we were proposing at the micro and meso levels intersected with direction of the macro level of the national system in Jordan.

In the previous section, I provided an explanation of the main assets and challenges at the macro, meso, and micro levels. In the next section, I identify the general components of teacher evaluation that should serve as the central drivers for the IA new teacher evaluation program for English teachers.

Project Design

The PAR project and study initiated a different process for arriving at the evaluation criteria for teachers that included the teachers' voice. This section defines the proposed design of the study, including the research questions, the theory of action, the driver diagram, and an overview of the two PAR cycles. I conclude with contextual considerations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the participatory action research (PAR) study was to co-generate a meaningful evaluation process for teacher growth and development that is focused on improving practices and includes students at all levels of language development. The aim included several implicit steps: to engage English teachers in a meaningful teacher evaluation process for improving practices for all levels of student language development. Thus, by using iterative cycles of the PAR inquiry process, we intended to test and develop through trial and error a more useful teacher evaluation model that we can share across the school.

Research Questions

The PAR project and study were guided by one overarching question: How do we engage English teachers in a meaningful teacher evaluation process for improving practices for all levels of student language development? We addressed the following PAR sub-questions through the implementation of Community Learning Exchanges (CLEs) in PAR Cycles One and Two:

1. To what extent did teachers improve their instructional practices for English Language learning?
2. To what extent did the English Language Heads of Departments (HODs) and instructional leaders develop the capacity (knowledge, skills, beliefs, motivation) to implement effective teacher evaluation practices?
3. How was my leadership improved through the PAR process?

Theory of Action

The theory of action rested on this premise: If the CPR team co-generate a meaningful teacher observation and evaluation process that engages English teachers and English heads of departments (HODs), then we can (a) improve teaching practices for all levels of language development and (b) support teachers in making decisions about improving their practices. In addition to relying on the participatory action research methodologies, we used the improvement sciences and community learning exchange pedagogies to support our inquiry.

Aim Statement and Driver Diagram

The improvement aim was to engage three English teachers and three instructional leaders (one being myself) in a meaningful teacher observation and evaluation process for improving classroom practices for all levels of language development. Table 1, the driver diagram, guided us as we engaged in the work; it shows the people and processes that were the primary and secondary factors or drivers for this study (Bryk et al., 2015). The driver diagram summarizes the primary and secondary drivers or key players and their roles in the participatory action research (PAR) study. The primary drivers were the immediate focus of the PAR: to engage English teachers in co-constructing a meaningful evaluation process for improving practices for all levels of language development.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) Cycles of Inquiry

The participatory action research project and study comprised two cycles that spanned two terms within one academic year. We focused first PAR cycle (Fall 2019) on creating the CPR team, understanding the focus of practice, and completing the first cycle of meetings, observations, and post-observation conversations to better understand existing CPR beliefs and practices. In the second cycle (Spring 2020), we built CPR resiliency and established a shared understanding of CLE axioms and strategies to further establish a shared language for ongoing reflective practice. An overarching axiom guiding this cycle of inquiry was “the people closest t

Table 1

Driver Diagram

AIM: To engage English teachers in meaningful evaluation process for improving practices for all levels of language development. This driver diagram guided our work.

Primary Drivers	Secondary Drivers
CPR members will: • Co-generate a safe space for learning and for precise and meaningful feedback; • Engage in praxis: HOD to practice giving precise feedback to engage teacher voice and help teachers make own decisions about improving teaching; • Develop goals and collect and analyze evidence of instructional growth; • Assure that all students' language and literacy levels are engaged in the classroom.	Other HODs and international subject teachers are welcome to join and contribute to the conversation and CPR discussions.
CPR members will improve the teacher evaluation process and: • Examine the current IA teacher evaluation rooted in school culture; • Co-create a comprehensive process tool after studying multiple models, theories, and pedagogies related to evaluation; • Implement coaching strategies that help leaders of English teachers ask better questions to motivate better answers from English teachers; • Implement coaching strategies that help English teachers make decisions to improve their practice; • Engage the leadership team in co-constructing the final teacher evaluation process model.	The lack of a supportive teacher evaluation process for English teachers: Supports CPR group work to develop a thorough process that engages teachers in a meaningful teacher evaluation process.
CPR members will implement Community Learning Exchange (CLE) to: • Build capacity such as knowledge in sociocultural theory and second language development; • Develop strategies and policies for interaction in Second Language with students to give students voice in SL; • Use storytelling as a primary evidence and improvement tool.	School Wide Professional Learning Opportunities support teacher development: PD Director will work closely with CPR to imbed PD that will contribute to building knowledge regarding SL acquisition, teaching, and learning.

Table 1 (continued)

Primary Drivers	Secondary Drivers
K-12 English Department Heads will: • Develop an evidence-based observation process that is a supportive growth model for teachers; • Develop differentiated observation processes according to teachers interests and needs; • Encourage peer observations; Create a platform to change the current conversations that take place in PLCs from conversations about scope and sequence to sharing best practices about teaching.	Leadership Team Expand practices to the leadership team.

the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns" (Guajardo et al., 2016).

In the second cycle (Fall 2020), I analyzed the qualitative evidence from individual interviews, meetings, community learning exchanges (CLEs), observations, and post-observation reflective conversations to verify the findings and predictions related to the focus of practice (Saldaña, 2016). During the second cycle, in addition to the analysis of data from this cycle, I conducted a member check with CPR members to verify findings. The PAR Cycles of inquiry are detailed in Chapter 4. By collecting the same types of evidence in successive cycles, we deepened the CPR team's ability to use evidence to make iterative decisions to inform a meaningful teacher observation and evaluation process, and we were able to introduce this process more broadly in the school.

Contextual Considerations

International Academy (IA) serves over 5,000 students in a bilingual setting. English was the second language for most of IA students. IA offered multiple curricula programs, and each curriculum is taught in a separate school system under the umbrella of the International Academy Foundation. There are a total of 11 schools under this umbrella. International Academy offers the British IGCSE program and the American Curriculum from Grades 1 through 12, the International Baccalaureate for Grades 9–12, and the Jordanian National Curriculum from Grades K through 12.

School community members reported that the international curriculum and the national curriculum offered different programs and required different levels of expertise, insinuating that the skill set needed to teach in the national program was less rigorous and would entail less training and inferior pay. I differed with this notion as it is my firm belief that teaching and learning the English Language should be equitable in both national and international programs.

The skills needed to teach the English language do not differ from one program to another, even if the content and curriculum targets are somewhat different.

It would be difficult to rewrite the narrative within the school community so that teachers in both programs are viewed as valuable when the international teachers are paid 50% more than their colleagues in the national program and the tuition is 50% higher in the international program. Given that we were one school, we created opportunities for trans-disciplinary or cross-curricular opportunities for the teachers and students in both programs so that through these interactions, both students and teachers could create a unified narrative that may eliminate the status barrier. How this is to be accomplished through the proposed teacher evaluation process requires further collaborative reflection and action.

One important factor affecting possible equity limitations of the PAR is the fact that students have the option to move from any educational program in Jordan to another before entering the 10th grade. Parents who cannot afford the international school programs send their children to public schools with the national curriculum program, knowing that their children will not receive the support they need to learn English well. The Jordanian national program offers a content-driven curriculum in English that primarily focuses on teaching grammar. Because of this pattern, an equity issue has developed when students enter international schools at upper primary grades from the national programs and need additional support that they are not receiving. The schools face a complex task: to ensure that students who entered private international schools in upper primary or later could learn on par with their age cohorts. Analysis of the reading and writing fluency assessments indicates that students in the national program are behind their age peers in the international program in basic English language skills. The Queen Rania Foundation (2017) affirmed that "Jordan has sought in recent curriculum reforms to switch from a content-driven curriculum to a competency-based curriculum that focuses on students achieving a set of outcomes at the end of each grade level and education cycle" (p. 1). This equity issue emerges as an important additional rationale for the focus of practice.

Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

I maintained the confidentiality of data collected and analyzed during the course of this research throughout the project and will do so for three years following the conclusion. I stored all transcriptions and recordings of interviews, meeting notes, and memos digitally, and password protected all data to one device to which no one but myself has access. All participants were anonymous, and I gave them pseudonyms for the study. I provided participants an informed consent form, and they could withdraw their participation in the study at any time.

Study Limitations

The participatory action research project was conducted in an international bilingual school in Amman, Jordan; the findings were directly applicable only to this context or a similar international school with a high percentage of English language learners. The study sample was small; however, other international schools in similar contexts could make use of the process we undertook to work with teachers to craft an observation system that was more useful to them.

I was a member of the international school community in which the PAR study took place. My position as an insider helped me establish relationships with the CPR group and maintain open and critical dialogue. However, I came into this project with previously established ideas about the perspectives of participants and current processes for evaluating English teachers. Being aware of this means I continually examined my own understandings and reactions as part of this study.

Because I was an instructional leader and the school principal, I was mostly perceived as an overseer and administrator. Thus, I redefined my role of school principal, and I expected this to present complexities for teachers. Contrary to my expectation, it did not. I anticipated my position as the school principal and a female addressing a sensitive issue that directly affected contract renewal to hinder collaboration or conversation. As it turned out, my role did not constrain the dialogue needed for this research to be successful, and I established a safe place for conversation within the CPR group. I carefully designed the questions guiding the CLEs in the form of interviews, conferences, and focus groups. Time limitations and fear of commitment prevented one member of the school community from agreeing to participate in the CLEs; however, all teachers from the English department were willing to participate enthusiastically. When I recruited participants before facilitating the CLEs, it was of utmost importance that the CPR team and I established a shared belief that the CLE would be a safe space in which we would work together on teacher evaluation and demonstrate appreciation for the importance of the work to encourage their long-term commitment.

Chapter Summary

For evaluations to have a long-term impact, leaders and teachers need to believe that they are useful and have personal and professional value. “At base is a common story of going fast and learning slow. We consistently fail to appreciate what it actually takes to make some promising idea work reliably in practice” (Bryk et al., 2015, p. 6). I am committed to changing the processes of observation and post-observation conversations so that we can address the systemic issues that play out in the micro and meso contexts in which I served. If we do not address this both as an organizational issue related to evaluation and in the daily practice of teaching and learning, we will continue to provide inadequate education for English language learners. Based on two prior action research projects in international schools (Paryani, 2019;

Powell, 2019), I was aware of the strengths and pitfalls of change projects in an international context. The Jordanian context is different, but I drew on their lessons to make this project successful and change the observation and evaluation processes at the International Academy.

The dissertation includes six additional chapters. Chapter 2 offers the literature review and presents a summary of theoretical, research-based, and practice-based literature that will inform the CPR work, the history of teacher evaluation, different teaching and observation evaluation models, informal alternatives for observation, supporting second language acquisition in the classroom, and reflective practice. Chapter 3 describes the elements of the school context, including the organizational structure, adopted curriculums, and dynamics of the school community. Chapter 4 explains in more detail the participatory action research methodology for data collection and analysis of the participatory action research. Each of Chapters 5 and 6 present the results of sequential cycles of inquiry. Chapter 7 discusses the strategic findings and implications for future practice.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of the participatory action research (PAR) project is the revision of the teacher evaluation process so that it is more meaningful for teachers and supports them in improving their classroom instructional practices. The PAR gave special attention to the needs, perspectives, and experiences of teachers who teach English Language Learners (ELLs) at all levels of language development in an international school. Through a focus on the needs of second language learners, a Co-Practitioner Research (CPR) group, the English department head, three teachers, and myself as principal, engaged in two reflective cycles of observation and feedback in an ELL international school setting. We sought to improve instructional practice by engaging instructional leaders in reflective clinical observation and providing teachers with meaningful actionable feedback.

The upsurge in English Language learners in schools worldwide has led to the creation of an abundance of instructional strategies for teaching English language learners (ELLs). However, the research related to appraising the quality of teaching English as a second language in international settings is less frequent. More research is needed in closer proximity to the classroom settings in international schools to focus the attention on supporting the needs of teachers in transnational and bilingual settings through meaningful cycles of observation, academic discussion, and relevant feedback. Barnett (2011) asserts that “exemplary teachers of ELL students have been understudied” (p. 56), and Farrell (2013) affirms that “within the field of English language teaching (ELT), teacher expertise is still a very under-researched topic” (p. 1071).

Teacher supervision and evaluation typically have two functions: accountability and improvement (OECD, 2009); to clarify, supervision culminates in evaluation. Within the framework of the participatory action research (PAR) study, I reviewed literature on clinical supervision models and frameworks for effective instructional supervision leading to improved teacher practice as a way to understand successful teaching of ELLs. The goal of the participatory action research was to co-generate a process that made evaluation more meaningful, helped to mature the educators' beliefs about how students learn language and fostered self-motivated development. To support this process, we engaged teachers and leaders in cycles of observation, feedback, reflection, and dialogue. As indicated in a case study of a novice English teacher, "[T]alking, writing and observing classes all can contribute to the exploration and reflection of teacher beliefs and classroom practices" (Farrell, 2013, p. 608). The purpose for the cycles of inquiry was to set iterative goals that provided teachers with new ideas as well as with ongoing and relevant feedback to support their professional growth (Kraft & Gilmore, 2016).

Using the PAR process, we identified the vital teaching skills, strategies, and knowledge teachers need to fully embrace all levels of language development and advancement in ELL settings. The ultimate goal for the study was to co-create an evaluation process for reflective supervision for instructional leaders in ELL settings, a tool that helps instructional leaders to adjust expectations and goals for improvement and to support teachers by individualizing the feedback they receive (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). The key areas for consideration were: enacting instructional leadership through supervision and evaluation; teacher learning that examines the relationship between teachers' epistemological frames and how that translates to practice; and equitable teaching of ELLs. Figure 2 represents the intersection of these three areas of the literature review. We expected that the overlap among the three areas would create a space

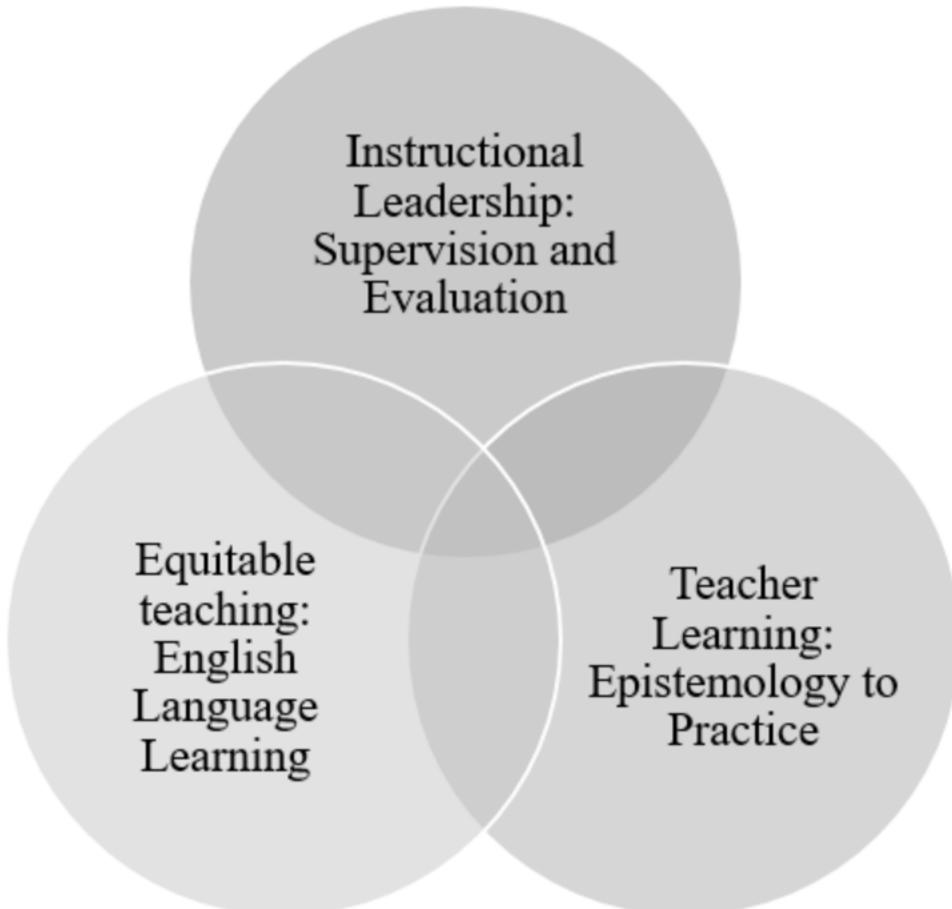


Figure 2. Literature review overview.

of learning for the CPR team and influence our teaching practices as we concurrently changed the teacher evaluation model using evidence-based clinical supervision practices.

Instructional Leadership: Supervision and Evaluation

The historical purpose of teacher evaluation was to standardize the way teachers were employed and compensated. However, the purpose has shifted, and now evaluations are primarily intended to understand teacher practices and offer feedback for improvement. During the early 1900s, educators "experimented with evaluation practices found in other economic sectors" (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016, p. 6). By the 1940s, classroom observations and the use of ranking systems had become widely used in schools and were fundamental for the educational revolution toward teacher supervision for the purpose of teacher learning and improvement (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). In the US, this system became institutionalized in school districts, and principals had the responsibility of evaluating teachers; in the UK system, teacher evaluation was termed an "inspection" system. Whatever the form or name, however, standardized forms of evaluation persisted and were not meeting the growth and development needs of teachers.

Clinical supervision concurrently developed as standardized forms of evaluation were failing to enhance teacher growth and development (Acheson & Gall, 2003; Cogan, 1973; Glanz & Sullivan, 2003; Goldhammer, 1969; Saphier, 1993). Researchers and educators widely believed that effective supervision would culminate in formal evaluation, and together they would contribute to professional development and practitioner growth (Acheson & Gall, 2003; Saphier, 1993; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Despite the premise of supporting teachers, which the clinical supervision models advocated, most evaluation remained *pro forma, standardized* for all teachers. The evaluation process typically did not yield specific evidence useful for any individual teacher and used subjective, judgmental formats (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016; Toch & Rothman, 2008). In analyzing instructional leadership, I explore the benefits of a clinical supervision system that includes models of formal and informal processes of clinical supervision. I then discuss how teacher evaluation systems that are framed as growth and development can contribute to teacher professional learning.

Instructional Leadership

Effective instructional leadership is an important criterion for moving the needle on student outcomes (Grissom et al., 2013; Irvine & Hawley, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2012). An instructional leader should be more than a source of knowledge, but rather facilitate learning opportunities for teachers by being aware of what teachers know and how they learn (Hoerr, 2015). However, in their study of 125 schools in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Grissom et al. (2013) report that principals spend only between 10% (high schools) and 17% (elementary schools) of their time on instructional leadership, which is insufficient to promote stronger teacher practice.

Leadership and Policy in Schools

Traditionally, researchers have heavily emphasized the teaching and learning aspects of instructional leadership. However, the instructional leader needs to attend to the conditions that are useful for instructional routines, including time and structures for professional learning. An alternative view is that successful instructional leadership is correlated with organizational and specifically personnel management (Horng & Loeb, 2010). The most effective instructional leaders are powerful managers who staff their schools with highly effective teachers and then retain, support, and develop the teachers as needed; however, they are not shy about removing ineffective teachers if needed.

The instructional leader moves to implement a discipline-specific instructional improvement policy. These policies include traditional clinical supervision roles in observation and feedback, facilitative leadership that they model in and out of the classroom, and organizational management (Horng & Loeb, 2010). Three processes strengthen instructional leadership: walkthroughs, instructional rounds, and effective feedback.

Enacting Instructional Leadership

Walkthroughs and Instructional Rounds are both popular models to enact instructional leadership. Walkthroughs, or quick visits to classrooms, were offered as a “silver bullet” approach to instructional leadership, but the evidence suggests that they are not an effective strategy for changing teacher practice (Marsh et al., 2005). Instructional rounds, built on a collaborative model of the grand rounds format as introduced by City et al. (2010), also have been a popular method. Enacting either of these strategies successfully requires shifting to effective feedback and coaching conversations rather than simply telling the teacher what to do.

Walkthrough Observations. When the re-emphasis on instructional leadership emerged, school leaders began to conduct walkthroughs. The practice literature abounded with ideas and professional development about how to conduct walkthroughs, often with processes that included checklists. The originators of the practice claimed that walkthroughs would improve achievement through a focus on “look-fors,” brief notes to indicate to the teacher “two wows and a wonder”, which means two assets and a question or a comment for the teacher to reflect upon (David, 2007; Protheroe, 2009). Marsh et al. (2005) reported that administrators found walkthroughs more useful than did teachers (who rarely received individual feedback), and those doing the walkthroughs reported learning more than those who were observed (Marsh et al., 2005). The evidence on walkthroughs produced no correlation with student achievement largely because there were typically no substantive conversations with teachers after the walkthrough. Despite the popularly held conviction that frequent instructional walkthroughs are useful, in fact, the walkthroughs negatively impacted teacher practice (Grissom et al., 2013). “The most common reasons given for conducting walkthroughs reflect a focus on monitoring teacher practices in order to gather information and be more visible to staff” instead of improving instruction; not surprisingly, walkthroughs were negatively associated with improving teacher practice or student outcomes. However, the principals in the study who used the walkthrough as an opportunity to have coaching conversations as well as gain information were more successful.

Instructional Rounds. Instructional rounds, IR, are a supervision model replicating the idea of instructional rounds in hospitals. Instructional rounds adopt “a set of protocols and processes for observing, analyzing, discussing, and understanding instruction that can be used to improve school learning to scale” (City et al., 2018, p. 3). Teitel (2009) describes instructional rounds as “a focused, systematic, purposeful, and collective way” to look at what is going on in the classroom (p. 1). School administrators adopting instructional rounds spend a considerable amount of time in classrooms, observing instruction in detail. “They learn to talk in new ways with each other about what they see, replacing vague or judgmental generalizations with precise and nonevaluative language” (Tietel, 2009, p. 1). Instructional rounds focus on initiating discussions about instruction to inform school improvement efforts (City et al., 2018).

The guiding concept of instructional rounds is to look at teaching and learning practices together with teachers rather than adopt a judgmental lens. Instructional rounds have five stages: first, the team of school administrators identifies a problem of practice or a focus before embarking on classroom visits (see Figure 3). A clearly defined problem or focus is the heart of the instructional rounds and is generally shared with the team observing a cluster of classrooms

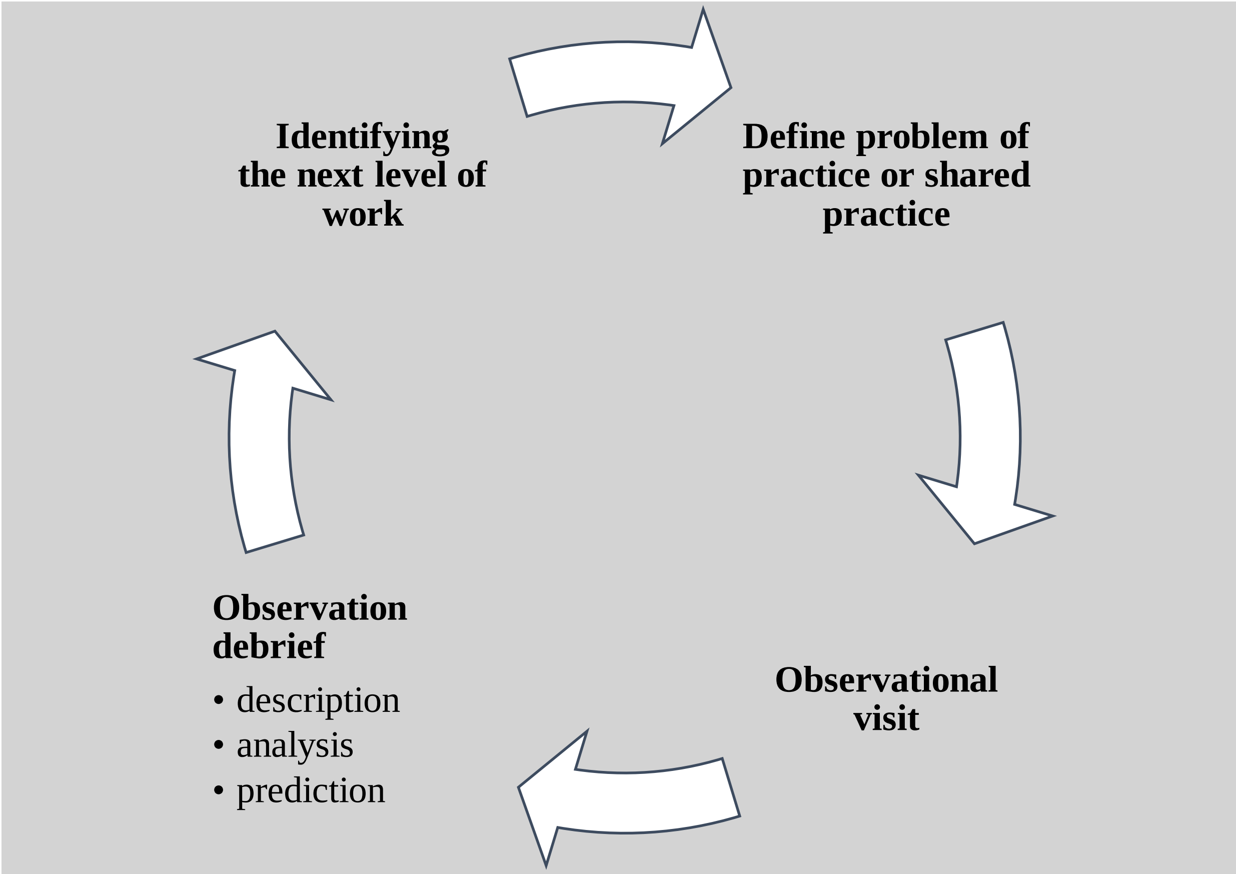


Figure 3. Stages of instructional rounds.

sharing the same problem. The second stage (the visit) is the observation of practice. During the visit, the observer takes thorough notes about what the learners or students are doing in the classroom; observers will look carefully for patterns or practices related to the problem as defined. The third stage of the instructional rounds is the observation debrief, which comprises three steps: description, analysis, and prediction. The description stage is factual descriptions only omitting reactions, judgments, or inferences. Once the detailed descriptions are shared, they are analyzed to find patterns in practice. The identified patterns are then the springboard for the prediction phase that connects teaching practices to learning to help identify areas for improvement. The final stage in a cycle of instructional rounds is pinpointing the next level of work (Tietel, 2009).

Fullan describes Tietel's instructional rounds as a process that increases teachers' agency as it "shifts the center from top-down compliance to teacher engagement and collective efficacy" (Fullan, 2014, p. 81). The problem of practice or rather the shared practice for observation in this study was patterns and practices for teachers instructing ELLs at all levels of language development in an international school.

Effective Feedback. Effective feedback that is timely and actionable must be developmentally appropriate and useful (Drago-Severson & Blum-Stefano, 2017). Effective feedback facilitates reflection, construction of new knowledge and purpose, and a shift in practice. To activate those teacher actions, effective feedback should be individualized, specific, nonjudgmental, compassionate, and regular. Feedback is meaningful when it helps mature teacher's knowledge and beliefs, fosters self-driven teacher development, and instills a deeper understanding of language advancement for ELLs.

Effective feedback comports with what we know about how adults learn best in informal settings—through experiences and immediate feedback in which they have a sense of collaboration and find the conversations leads to recommendations that are immediately actionable (Drago-Severson, 2012; Knowles et al., 2015). According to Buckingham and Goodall (2019), feedback from the principal directed to teachers does not support teacher learning; in fact, teachers rarely change by being told what to do. Instead, principals need to use evidence from classroom observations to lead conversations about practice (Saphier, 1993; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). In addition, an established routine of ongoing conversation rather than infrequent feedback after an evaluation or walkthrough helps teachers reflect and make choices about how to adjust their practice.

School leaders can enact the practice of ongoing conversation through the reflective clinical supervision model. I next define clinical supervision and then compare the traditional or formal clinical supervision model and the reflective supervision model. I also examine informal supervision and the importance of connecting the supervision process to professional learning, I conclude with an analysis of effective instructional leadership, which includes the effective supervision models that I have discussed.

Clinical Supervision

Clinical supervision is rooted in other professional sectors. In the medical field, for example, clinical supervision means supervising a practitioner who is planning treatment for a patient, followed by observing and then assessing the treatment. Clinical education supervision differs from other traditional models of evaluation in that its goal is teacher development with an emphasis on improving classroom practice.

Defining Clinical Supervision and Supervisor. Supervision and evaluation are closely related but distinct. Accountability is the main purpose of evaluation: teacher evaluation is the assessment of ability and performance and is usually mandated by law or an official authority (Acheson & Gall, 2003). Traditionally, teacher evaluation has been a routine, authoritarian process, mostly without significant outcomes or gains in teacher learning. “Practitioners, researchers, and policy makers agree that most current teacher evaluation systems do little to help teachers improve or to support personal decision making” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012, p. 3).

Teacher supervision is the provision of ongoing support through meaningful feedback resulting in teacher improvement. Supervision may involve a wide variety of formal and informal processes, including the clinical supervision model, teacher professional development programs, and reflection (Eady & Zepeda, 2007; Hazi & Rucinski, 2009; Mette et al., 2017; Ponticell & Zepeda, 2004). Clinical supervision is guided by knowledge about effective teaching that depends on effective instructional leadership (Acheson & Gall, 2003). A clinical supervisor views the teacher as a “professional who is actively seeking greater expertise, and the focus is on strengths and needs” (Acheson & Gall, 2003, p. 3). Because a clinical supervisor often doubles as the evaluator, teachers sometimes find it hard to distinguish their roles, especially if the supervisor only comes to the classroom to observe when the evaluation is completed. When a school leader holds both these responsibilities, clarifying which hat the school leader is wearing in varying circumstances is beneficial. “While the supervisor may view her evaluator role as one of support, the supervisor is also in a position of judgment” (Paryani, 2019, p. 17). Obviously, the dual role can cause tension. The word supervisor in this study refers to principals, assistant principals, department heads, or instructional coaches who assume the role of an instructional leader.

Standard Clinical Supervision Model. According to Acheson and Gall (2003), clinical supervision is “a process, a strategy, a distinctive style of relating to teachers” (p. 3). The predominant goal for the clinical supervision model is to effectively support teachers to improve classroom instructional practices and to offer teachers a platform for dialogue and reflection about their practice. The ultimate aim of clinical supervision is to encourage teachers to see supervision as a professional learning opportunity. Traditional clinical supervision models are structured as a cyclical process with three main components: preconference, observation, and post-conference (Saphier, 1993).

Preconference or the Planning Conference. The planning conference “sets the stage” for a successful clinical supervision cycle. The supervisor meets with the teacher to plan for the classroom observation before the observation takes place. During this conference, the supervisor needs to identify and record the teacher’s evolving understandings about teaching and apprehensions regarding instruction. During the conversation, the supervisor needs to recognize strategies for improving the teacher’s plan for instruction and communicate them before the observation. This conference does not need to be long; 20 to 30 minutes will suffice. It is best that the planning conference is not held in the supervisor’s office to establish an atmosphere for trust and comfort (Acheson & Gall, 2003).

Observation. The purpose of an observation is to collect convincing and unprejudiced data for a post-conference to stimulate reflective conversation and reflective practice in cycles of feedback. The observation is objective and nonjudgmental; the observer records raw observational data for analysis. Observation practices are a learned skill and practice because the observer has to choose what to record (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Effective teaching practices and methods to record include, *inter alia*: selective verbatim, wide lens, seating chart, timeline coding, and transcribing teacher feedback or dialogue (Acheson & Gall, 2003).

Post-Conference. Supervisor feedback is the most typical kind of post-conference. This formal cyclical process usually takes place for evaluation purposes, but a modified form can and should take place more frequently. However, in either setting the supervisor can alter the typical process of providing feedback and instead structure the conversation based on evidence from the observation (Grubb & Tredway, 2010). In this type of post-conference, the supervisor and teacher meet to jointly analyze the observational data recorded by the observer to accomplish two objectives: (1) give the teacher an opportunity to interpret the observational data from her/his perspective; and (2) reach collaborative decisions on how to improve classroom practice.

The clinical supervision model may be used as a tool for evaluation purposes because supervisors can then complete the appropriate school, district, or state forms. However, the process of appraisal is more worthwhile when teachers are given a platform to express their feelings or suggestions and co-construct ways to change their practices. For example, in a study of six middle school teachers, when teachers compared the formulaic observation and feedback model and then used different tools and post-conference processes, they preferred a tailor-made and personal process over a *pro forma* one (Paryani, 2019). We intend to employ the clinical supervision process to encourage evaluators to listen to teachers and engage them in conversations instead of telling them what we saw and what to do.

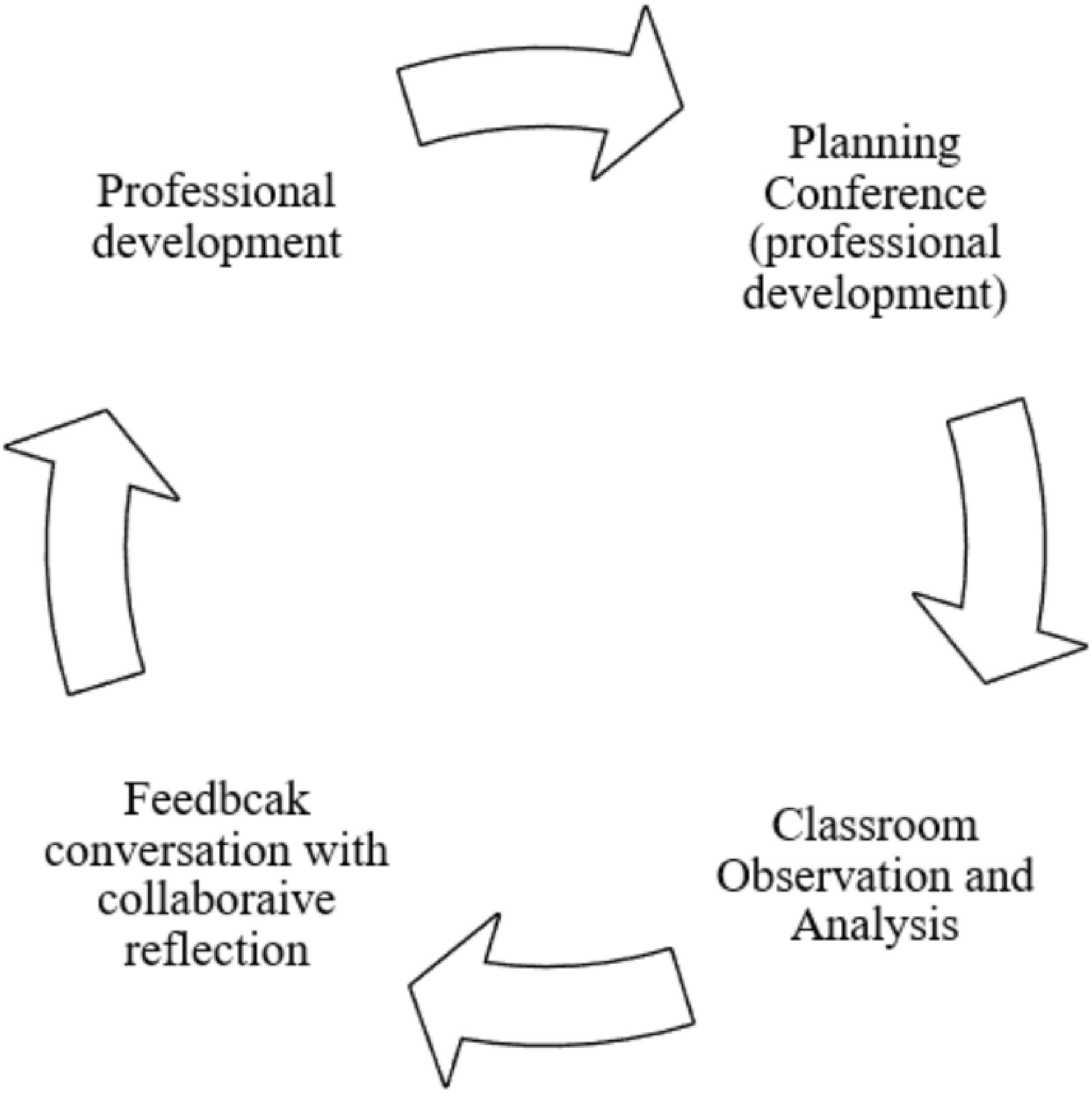
The clinical supervision model can help teachers develop content knowledge and skill and to improve instruction through understanding their problems of practice via objective feedback. In summary, "[c]linical supervision is the heart of a good teacher evaluation process"

(Acheson & Gall, 2003, p. 94). Feedback cycles and conferences are “purposeful activities” that prompt an ongoing academic conversation when the supervisor has designed questions to prompt reflection. The PAR study will employ a reflective clinical supervision model in which feedback conferences support “situative learning,” defined as a shared and synergistic relationship between the “context, learner, and the activity” (Soslau, 2015, p. 24).

Reflective Clinical Supervision Model. The reflective clinical supervision model is an enhanced version of clinical supervision. The initial planning conference is the most important part in the cycle because it sets the tone for dialogue, establishes trust between the supervisor and the teacher, establishes the content and focus for the observation, and gives the teacher a chance to discuss problems of practice before the observation takes place. The supervisor can then offer professional development suggestions before any observation takes place. Changes in instructional practices in this reflective cycle usually begin during the planning phase rather than after observation, the opportunity to present problems a priori takes the “heat” off the teacher who may then feel less judged when the problem manifests itself during the observation (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013).

The reflective clinical supervision model adds a fourth step to the cycle of clinical supervision, the professional development phase. The goal of this phase is to pinpoint an experience, conceptualize ideas, and decide on actions to transform practice. This completes the cycle of supervision and simultaneously begins another as shown in Figure 4 (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013).

The goal of reflective practice in the reflective clinical supervision model is to improve instructional practice and align actions with beliefs or intentions as “our actions often are inconsistent with our intentions (or beliefs), and new ideas do not necessarily lead to new



Note. (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013, p. 121).

Figure 4. Reflective clinical supervision.

behaviors" (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013, p. 30). In addition, there are other alternatives that support the supervision and evaluation processes. Sullivan and Glanz (2013) examine five alternative approaches to evaluation that have been tested in practice and may be used in conjunction with reflective clinical supervision: peer coaching, portfolios for differentiated supervision, mentoring, peer assessment, and action research. The authors state that the preference for the phrase *alternative* approaches instead of *differentiated* supervision is based on the belief that the former phrase offers practitioners a range of options from traditional to nontraditional and from evaluative to non-evaluative. In addition, since adults report that they learn best in informal and experiential settings, looking for informal learning opportunities for teachers is the responsibility of the supervisor (Drago-Severson, 2008).

The PAR study aims to employ a discipline-specific evaluation model with equity at its heart. We built on the original Danielson model updated with a culturally responsive pedagogy framework. The Danielson evaluation model is of an interest to this study because it provides a rubric concerning the teacher's use of language in the classroom, the language rubric provides clear attributes for each level of teacher performance which will specifically help the teacher facilitate learning for ELL students. However, missing from the Danielson framework is an emphasis on equity; therefore, we also incorporated the Irvine and Hawley (2011) tool developed for the Teaching Tolerance education reform arm of the Southern Poverty Law Center. The CPR framework highlights what instructional beliefs and practices teachers need to facilitate the learning of linguistically diverse students (Irvine & Hawley, 2011).

Teacher Evaluation Frameworks. The CPR team explored and considered teacher evaluation models for use in the PAR to learn from prior work in the field. We had to adapt the models to our context, including the national context of Jordan, of international schools in general, and the specific characteristics of our own school. I examine two models that were supportive of our process: (1) the Danielson model (2013), which is used quite widely in the US and has influenced some international schools; and (2) the Irvine and Hawley (2011) model, which adds to the Danielson model a stronger equity perspective.

Danielson Teacher Evaluation Model. At the heart of the Danielson model is the conviction that "classroom observations can foster teacher learning—if observation systems include crucial components and observers know what to look for" (Danielson, 2012, p. 1). The Danielson (2013) Teacher Evaluation instrument proposes four domains that encompass clear and precise indicators for good teaching. For each domain Danielson describes the elements, indicators, levels of proficiency, and critical attributes and provides examples. The tool is exceptionally detailed as its goal is to supply instructional leaders with specific attributes to look for while observing. Table 2 outlines the Danielsen evaluation tool.

Component 3a is of particular interest to the study as it frames in detail the importance of the teacher's use of language in the classroom for effective instruction. Danielson states that the teachers' language should be "vivid, rich, and error-free, affording the opportunity for students to hear language used well and to extend their own vocabularies. Teachers present complex concepts in ways that provide scaffolding and access to students" (Danielson, 2013, p. 41). Danielson asserts that the language the teacher uses may be the only source for students to learn language proficiently. In the 2013 model, Danielson describes critical attributes for how teachers model language use in the classroom, including:

- The teacher invites students to explain the content to their classmates.
- Students suggest other strategies they might use in approaching a challenge or analysis.

Table 2

Danielson Teacher Evaluation Model Domains 1, 2, 3, and 4

Domain	Indicators
Domain 1: Planning and Preparation	1A: Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy 1B: Demonstrating knowledge of students 1C: Setting instructional outcomes 1D: Demonstrating knowledge of resources 1E: Designing coherent instruction 1F: Designing student assessments
Domain 2: The Classroom Environment	2A: Creating an environment of respect 2B: Establishing a culture of learning 2C: Managing classroom procedures 2D: Managing student behavior 2E: Organizing physical space
Domain 3: Instruction	3A: Communicating with students 3B: Using questioning 3C: Engaging students in learning 3D: Using assessments in instruction 3E: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness
Domain 4: Professional responsibilities	4A: Reflecting on teaching 4B: Maintaining accurate records 4C: Communicating with families 4D: Participating in the professional community 4E: Growing and developing professionally 4F: Showing professionalism

- The teacher uses rich language, offering brief vocabulary lessons where appropriate, both for general vocabulary and for the discipline.
- Students use academic language correctly (Danielson, 2013, p. 43).

Danielson (2012) argues that unless the indicators of good teaching are clearly outlined, teachers will not know how they will be evaluated, and observers will not know what to look for.

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy. Culturally responsive instructional practice is based on the belief that "learning is a social and cognitive endeavor influenced significantly by the readiness, beliefs, and prior experiences that students bring to any particular opportunity to learn" (Irvine & Hawley, 2011, p. 13). Irvine and Hawley emphasize culturally responsive fundamentals that encompass teacher practices related to teacher learning, student learning, caring and intergroup relations as well as to how school organization that promotes equity. Although they do not specifically address linguistic responsiveness, CLRP clarifies what instructional beliefs and practices teachers need to facilitate learning among racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students (Irvine & Hawley, 2011).

Culturally and linguistically responsive instructional pedagogy requires three fundamental practices from teachers:

- Culturally responsive teachers comprehend and appreciate that all students, regardless of their cultural background, bring their culturally influenced reasoning, conduct, and outlooks with them to the classroom.
- Teachers must have a thorough and deep understanding of their subject content so that they can deliver the content in various ways that will assist the diverse needs of students. This will help students understand new knowledge, employ what they have learned, and help them make meaning of the world. This fundamental belief is of

interest to this study because it directly applies to adjusting teaching practices according to students' mastery of English.

- Culturally responsive teachers know how to connect new content to students' reality, to their everyday experiences, and to prompt them to connect new knowledge to their family, community, and the world they live in (Irvine & Hawley, 2011).

The CRP framework includes six measures for the instructional leader to guide evaluation of effective teaching:

1. Promoting and Learning from Family and Community Engagement
2. Developing Caring Relationships with Students
3. Engaging and Motivating Students
4. Assessing Student Performance
5. Grouping Students for Instruction
6. Selecting and Effectively Using Learning Resources

It is the duty of the instructional leader to understand how to embed these fundamental CRP instructional practices in the classroom to bridge the gap between instructional practice and teacher evaluation. Teacher training and development must be ongoing and enriched; simple pockets of training on cultural sensitivity will not substitute for a deeper understanding of the CRP fundamental practices in the classroom. Teacher training should encompass dialogue about clear examples of effective CRP practices in the classroom (Irvine & Hawley, 2011).

Another framework from a project to support principals in how to observe and stimulate conversations about academic discourse in classrooms specifically highlights culturally and linguistically responsive classrooms (Tredway, 2019). That framework includes an analysis of how the teacher can approach the work of language learning on a minimally inclusive to fully inclusive range. Figure 5, the authors describe the components of linguistically responsive instruction: the teacher's view of the use of home language, the teacher relationship with student(s), teacher knowledge, teacher expertise, and curricular and instructional supports.

We reflected on and adapted the Danielson (2013), Irvine and Hawley (2011), and Tredway (2019) frameworks for teacher practice to our context for use in the PAR project and study.

Summary

In this section, I examined instructional leadership and reviewed formal clinical supervision, the reflective supervision model, and forms of alternative or informal supervision. The main goal of these alternative approaches in supervision is the improvement of teacher learning and their instructional practices. I explained how the Danielson Teacher Evaluation framework is of interest to this study because it provides a language rubric with critical attributes for each level of performance. I presented in brief the fundamentals of the Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and how it relates to teacher evaluation and a framework for approaching linguistically responsive practice. In the PAR study, my goal was to employ a meaningful evaluation process that focused on equity for ELL students; to do this, I reviewed the frameworks related to teacher evaluation and, in the next section, focus on understanding teacher learning—how they come to know their epistemic stances as teachers and how their knowledge relates to their instructional improvement processes.

Teacher Learning: Epistemology to Practice

Instructional leaders must understand how teachers gain knowledge to be able to facilitate teacher growth and progression. Observations and walkthroughs are not the only ingredients to teacher improvement and growth; there are important informal alternatives for formal

Linguistically Responsive Practices	**Linguistically *un*responsive practices:**	**Linguistically *pre*-responsive practices:**	**Linguistically responsive practices:**
	• **View of language:** English seen as primary key to learning; language diversity viewed as a challenge • **Teachers knowledge of students:** Through test scores and other baseline academic data; little attention to personal identity as it relates to culture and linguistics • **Expertise for learning language:** External expertise to support ELL students; students often pulled from class; work with "different" instructional materials than their grade level colleagues; support and curriculum for ELL students primarily driven by ESL teacher • **Curricular and instructional supports:** Focused on simplification to make it easier for ELL students; little to no connection to the cultures represented in class or school	• **View of language:** Home language seen as asset and used to access concepts but prefer students convert/use English • **Teacher knowledge of students:** Some knowledge and use of cultural and linguistic context of students; some knowledge of home situations and histories • **Expertise for learning language** External experts (ESL teachers) "translate" class experience • **Curriculum and instruction:** Some materials used in the mainstream class and supplement with other materials designed to make the tasks easier; some attention to cultural representation of class or school	• **View of language:** Trans-languaging key to instructional process; ability to speak multiple languages is seen as an asset • **Teacher knowledge of students**: Deep knowledge and use of cultural, historical & linguistic contexts of ELL students • **Expertise for learning language:** Co-teaching of ESL and general ed. teachers; collaboration to determine support needed; student determination of language use • **Curriculum and instruction:** Authentic opportunities to develop language by providing challenging grade level content for students; amplification (not simplification) to ensure rigor and engagement

Note. (Tredway, 2019).

Figure 5. Framework for linguistically responsive practices: Propelled by equity-driven tools for school change.

supervision. However, observation and teacher professional learning should be connected one empirical study suggests that principals rarely use data from walkthroughs or observations as part of a broader school improvement strategy (Grissom et al., 2013). The way teachers come to learn—or their epistemological grounding in a socio-cultural context—is a linchpin for their growth and development.

Refinement of Everyday Knowledge and Practices

Teacher learning and improvement is complex and difficult to define as many kinds of knowledge in addition to content knowledge and daily strategies and practices are involved in teaching. Teaching and teacher learning is ongoing and constant in nature, and multiple skills and types of knowledge are employed simultaneously. Teacher learning or improvement may be defined "as the refinement of everyday knowledge and practices" (Russ et al., 2016, p. 426). With this understanding, the purpose of teacher evaluation is to engage teachers in reflective dialogue to refine performance by enhancing everyday knowledge and practices.

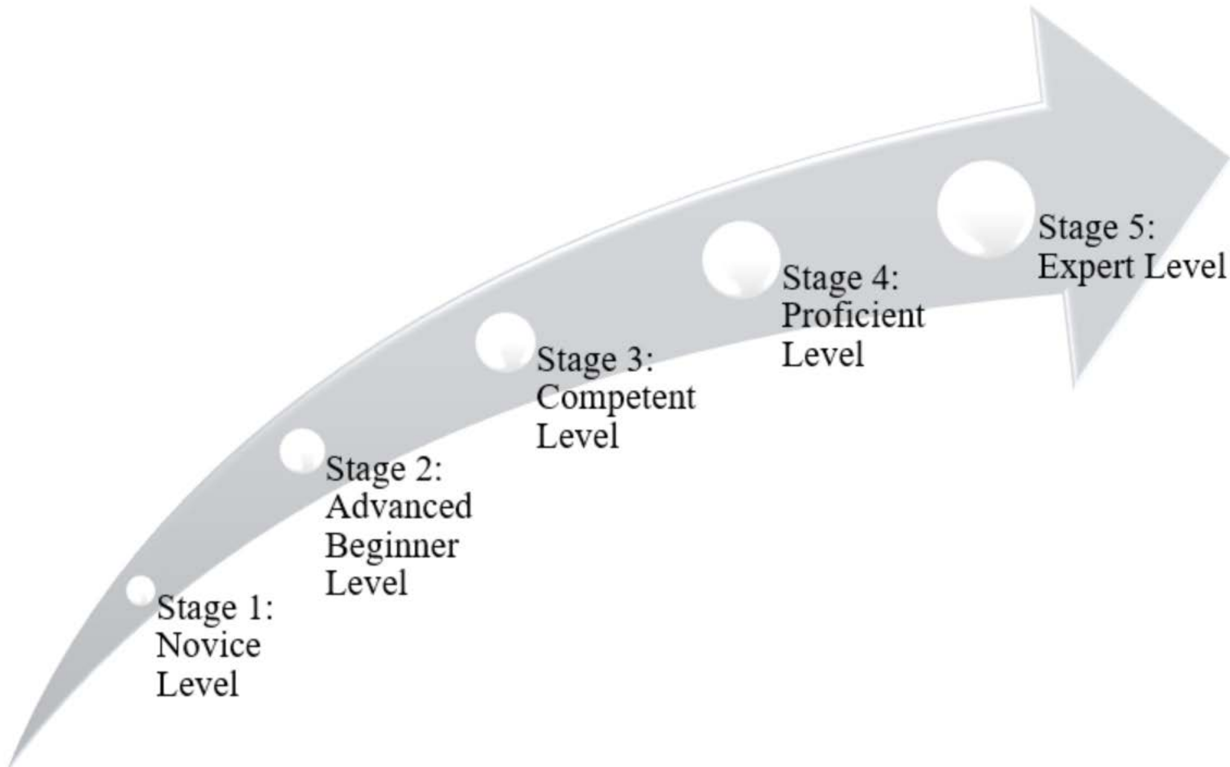
Researchers in different disciplines (e.g., science, mathematics) have attempted to identify vital characteristics of expertise so as to better inform their teacher education and development programs. The idea is that "developing teachers at all levels can be taught these representational skills of experts" (Farrell, 2013, p. 1070). Experience is synonymous with the numbers of years spent in the profession, but the quality of teaching regardless of experience is defined as expertise. Part of the PAR process aimed to uncover the skill set a teacher needs to become an expert or master teacher. Farrell (2013) confirms that "teaching experience does not automatically translate into teacher expertise unless teachers consciously and actively reflect on these experiences" (p. 2,013).

Giving meaningful feedback and differentiated opportunities for teacher learning and growth depends on understanding the stages of teacher development. As shown in Figure 6, Berliner identified five stages of teacher growth from least skilled to most qualified: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert. Feedback to the teacher should support appropriate development based on the competency level of the teacher and the different ways that adults come to know (Drago-Severson & Blum-Stefano, 2017).

Teacher Knowledge and Social Capital

Teacher epistemology or the process of coming to know drives practice, and teachers with relativistic epistemological beliefs are more effective; that is, their approach to knowledge and learning is not fixed but flexible (Barnett, 2011). Finding ways to develop teacher Epistemologies—what is sometimes termed social capital, cognitive capital, or professional capital—is necessary to provide a higher standard for teaching. Teacher epistemology can be transformed over time; however, change in ideas and beliefs takes time, patience, and nurturing. Structured communications through coaching approaches, which lead to reflecting and journal writings, and peer collaboration support teachers, but important to situate teachers as constructors of knowledge proved to be efficient to increase teacher efficacy and epistemology (Barnett, 2011). Further, if teachers consider learning as a social process that builds their identity as a member of a community of practice, they become more adept in their practice (Lave, 1996).

Schools can support teacher knowledge acquisition. In a case study in which a team of teachers described what useful feedback would look like, they said it should prompt reflection on instructional practices and give the teacher a well-defined idea of precisely which practice needs to be improved and why. They added that the supervisor and teacher should come to a mutual understanding of what characterizes effective teaching and what it would look like in a



Note. (Acheson & Gall, 2003).

Figure 6. Berliner's Model of Instructional Expertise.

classroom setting (Bryk et al., 2015). Schools can support teachers in sustaining relationships and generating social capital for the purposes of instructional improvement. Social capital provides a supportive foundation for teachers with key resources for school improvement. Key resources are cognitive capitals, social capitals, and material assets. Cognitive resources exchanged by teachers are knowledge related and may include information or expertise for improving teaching. Social resources exchanged could include trust, esteem, or a sentiment of collective efficacy. Material resources exchanged could be instructional supplies, curriculum materials, or us e of technology (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016). Horn and Little (2010) concur on the importance of generating social capital but clarifies that "shared dispositions towards improvement may be necessary but not sufficient for collaboration to yield opportunities for professional learning" and that "the analysis points to the utility of the conversational routine as a conceptual instrument for assessing the learning potential that resides in collaborative group interaction" (p. 212). Conversational routines and social interactions between educators and practitioners must be goal-oriented and structured to yield improvement in instructional practices; this practice builds the cognitive capital for stronger teaching. "Cognitive capital is embodied in how teachers understand the way they think and how they reflect on their actions—before, during, and after instruction" (Costa et al., 2014, p. 6).

To summarize, finding ways to develop teacher epistemologies—what are sometimes termed social capital, cognitive capital, or professional capital—are necessary to provide a higher standard for teaching. In discussing what constitutes teacher learning, Russ et al. (2016) state that "it might be productive to understand teacher learning as requiring the adjustment and tuning of existing knowledge and practices" (p. 423). With this understanding, I next compare the elements of effective teaching from various studies to perfect existing CPR practice.

Outlining Effective Teaching

The goal of supervision is to sustain, support, and nurture effective teaching and learning. Supervisors and teachers should have a well-founded understanding of what effective teaching and learning looks like in a classroom setting; practices that impact learning the most must be clearly defined. Table 3 compares evidence from three studies regarding what constitutes effective teaching.

The Table 3 comparison verifies that just as positive relationships between the teacher and the learner influence teaching, positive relationships influence teacher learning. Effective teaching is engaging, motivating, and inclusive of all students' language, culture, or ethnicity. Wholesome teaching provides students with multiple opportunities to succeed, and instruction is attuned to meet students' needs. In ELL settings, teachers must undertake another set of considerations, an asset that can enrich the learning experience for all students.

Equitable Teaching: English Language Learning

Before English teachers can consciously improve practices that fully include all levels of language development, teachers must comprehend Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The PAR project and study led me to conclude that gauging their knowledge on SLA should be part of the evaluation and supervision process. In discussing how SLA occurs in five stages, I then discuss how students acquire social and academic language and recommendations for improving instructional practices for teaching ELLs.

Stages of Language Acquisition

Researchers outlined the five main stages of SLA (see Table 4). However, Robertson and Ford (n.d.) add a sixth stage by differentiating between speech emergence and beginning fluency.

Table 3

Comparing Three Studies Outlining Effective or Successful Teaching

Shared themes	Rosekrans, 2017 Favorable teaching context & practices of ELL students	Irvine & Hawley, 2011 Inter-related pedagogical influences on student learning	Acheson & Gall, 2003 A Definition of Effective Teaching
Establish positive relationships:	(1) establish relationships and trust with students and demonstrate critical caring	Develop caring relationships with students while maintaining high expectations	Create an instructional climate that causes students to develop positive attitudes toward school and self.
Engage all students and build on their assets:	(2) build on students' cultural and linguistic repertoires	Engage and motivate students	Adjust instruction so that all students learn, irrespective of their ability, ethnicity, or other characteristic. Manage the classroom so that students are engaged in learning all or most of the time.
Make use of opportunities to enhance learning: Adjust instruction and balance the curriculum objectives with student needs:	(3) advocate for students (mentor, support, link with opportunities), (4) adapt curricular goals, instruction and testing to best meet students' needs.	Promote and learn from family and community engagement Group students for instruction Assess student performance Select and effectively use learning resources	Make sound decisions and plans that maximize students' opportunity to learn. Respond to initiatives for curriculum change so that the new curriculum's intents are fully realized. Provide instruction that helps students develop the knowledge, skills, and understandings intended by curriculum objectives.

Table 4

Language Acquisition Stages

Robertson & Ford, n.d.	Hill & Björk, 2018	Approximate Tie Frame	Blooms' Taxonomy Level	Characteristics of this stage of development
Pre-production	Pre-production	0-6 months (minimum 6 weeks)	Knowledge	In "the silent period" the student: Does not verbalize; nods "Yes" and "No." Uses gestures, draws, and points. Follows simple directions; has minimal comprehension. Uses survival vocabulary such as "water" or "bathroom". Answers low level questions. ELLs may be able to sound out words but not comprehend what they are reading. Plays simple games successfully, especially games they play well in their native language.
Early production	Early Production	6 months – 1 year	Comprehension	Has limited comprehension. Produces one- or two-word responses: uses key words and familiar phrases. Uses present-tense verbs. The focus is still on listening and absorbing the new language. Student will make many mistakes. Listens to and understands a simple story.
Speech Emergent	Speech Emergence	1-3 years	Application	Has good comprehension. Can produce simple sentences. Makes grammar and pronunciation errors. Frequently misunderstands jokes.

Table 4 (continued)

Robertson & Ford, n.d.	Hill & Björk, 2018	Approximate Tie Frame	Blooms' Taxonomy Level	Characteristics of this stage of development
Beginning Fluency	----	Grey area?	Analysis	Speech is moderately fluent in social situations with minimal errors. New contexts and academic language are challenging, and the individuals will struggle to express themselves due to gaps in vocabulary and appropriate phrases.
Intermediate Fluency	Intermediate Fluency	3-5 years	Synthesis	The student has excellent comprehension & makes few grammatical errors.

The general consensus is that it takes between 5 to 7 years for an individual to achieve advanced fluency.

Language Acquisition and Fluency

ELL students pass through three stages of fluency: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. The intermediate stage can be described as a grey area as speech is relatively fluent, but comprehension remains a challenge due to gaps in vocabulary and knowledge of appropriate phrases. Students with intermediate fluency need particular support and attention from teachers as they are somewhat lost in the grey area meaning they can look and sound more competent than they really are e. The PAR aims to support teachers through meaningful supervision in guiding students from intermediate to advanced fluency.

Students in school typically acquire language in two ways: social interactions or basic interpersonal communication and academic settings in which they develop cognitive academic language proficiency. I describe each setting and how language is acquired in each.

Acquiring Social Language

Social language, also known as “playground language,” is used for basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) (Cummins, 1981, 1996). ELLs use BICS to get along in day-to-day communication. BICS are used in the school hallways, on the school bus, in the playgrounds, and with peers and teachers in the classroom. These interactions often are not cognitively demanding. Students do not necessarily acquire social language from the everyday social interactions naturally, and they need to be deliberately taught what is appropriate and what is not in social settings. Social language needs to be modeled and rehearsed through planned daily exchanges. Haynes (2007) states that social language comes easier to students who are highly motivated to use the second language and when situations are organized to provide ELLs with the motivation and opportunity to engage in social language.

Acquiring Academic Language

Mastering academic and cognitive language in the classroom is quite different from acquiring social language on the playground. Educators need to understand the difference between social language and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), which is mostly abstract and relies on a text rather than a context. Acquiring CALP in English literature, mathematics, sciences, and social studies depends heavily on comprehending text. ELLs often struggle to understand texts and need support in academic vocabulary. In addition, they often struggle to express what they know in writing (Haynes, 2007). Acquiring academic language is aided by the process of translanguaging, which is a process for moving strategically using the first language to support second language learning in discrete ways (Garcia, 2009).

Improving Instructional Practices for English Language Learning

The Ramírez et al. (1991) report on bilingual educational programs found that teachers in these programs tend to ask questions that only require recall of facts. In fact, in more than half of their classroom exchanges, students are denied the opportunity to produce any oral language and are prompted to engage in simple recall (Cummins, 1992). That practice has changed little since the early 1990s as teachers have persisted in low cognitive-level questions.

Typically, ELL teachers feel comfortable asking students questions in the preproduction and early production stage of language development because the questioning is simpler; however, as they progress to more advanced language, teachers need to increase the use of high-level questions to encourage abstract thinking in the second language regardless of student language output levels (Callahan, 2005). Teachers must not mistake an ELL’s limited language output for an inability to think abstractly; in fact, students think at increasingly higher cognitive levels due to cognitive development, and the responsibility is with the teacher to make use of practices that draw on the higher cognitive level (Haynes, 2007; Piaget & Cook, 1952). Translanguaging is one way to address the issue of using the first language to conceptualize and make certain the students understand the concept in their first language and then translate into the second language (Piaget & Cook, 1952).

Conclusion

The PAR project and study were directed at improving teacher practices in addressing all levels of language for ELLs through a more effective supervision and evaluation process for teachers. To address the complexities of teacher learning, frequent teacher observations and conversations with teachers after the observation can impact how they change their practices. I analyzed several areas of research and practice literature relevant to the study, including three key areas: enacting instructional leadership through supervision and evaluation; the relationship between teachers' epistemological frame and how that translates to practice; and equitable and effective teaching of ELLs. In the PAR we explored pedagogical strategies to shift leadership practice in ELL settings. These shifts in practice intend to foster social capital, reflective practice, and understanding effective teaching. Shifts in practice for teachers will be designed to help them understand second language acquisition, apply appropriate instructional strategies, establish equity, and build on students' linguistic and cultural repertoires.

The study was embedded in an inclusive bilingual environment. The school's approach emphasizes acquisition of English and holds equally high expectations for ELL and non-ELL students, including graduating from high school and meeting college admission requirements. Preparation and ongoing instructional supervision for ELL teachers in this context depend on subject leaders or department heads shifting their supervision practices to support teachers in improving pedagogical practices. Therefore, the PAR focused on the interests, perspectives, and knowledge of a Co-Practitioner Research group comprising myself, a vice principal, the English Department Head, and three teachers who all engaged in reflective cycles of observation and feedback. We collaborated as a CPR team for two cycles of inquiry; the school leadership improved our practices in observation and conversations about practice. Together, we redesigned a supervision and evaluation process that supported teacher growth and development.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEXT

How do we engage English teachers in a meaningful evaluation process for improving their practice that fully includes all levels of language development? In the participatory action research (PAR) project and study, I supported teachers to teach English equitably through a meaningful process of growth and support. In this chapter, I describe the organizational structure and the bilingual context at the International Academy (IA) in Amman, Jordan where the project and study took place. To protect confidentiality, I use a pseudonym for the name of the school and initials for participants. I explore IA's history in the first section, including key educational milestones, as well as the Jordanian national context. I then discuss the philosophical foundations that guide the organization. Next, I provide a description of the educators who participated as co-practitioner researchers. Finally, I discuss an unexpected change in organizational structure and leadership that occurred at the end of PAR Cycle Two.

The International Academy: Overview

The International Academy, established as a nonprofit school in 1947, was founded with the aim of providing a bilingual Islamic education that would meet the highest academic standards while remaining firmly rooted in the Jordanian heritage. Jordan is an amusing infusion of a traditional and contemporary culture, and Amman (its capital) has become one of the most sophisticated cities in the Middle East. A core aspect of Jordanian culture is hospitality. The social statute of taking care of the guest is rooted in Bedouin tradition and is deeply embedded in the Jordanian society and customs. Jordan is located at the intersection of the three continents of the ancient world (Africa, Asia, and Europe), lending it geographic and population diversity. Jordan, perhaps best known for the city Petra, carved in rock thousands of years ago, it is one of the most spectacular attractions in the Middle East. Modern Jordan was founded by King

Abdullah I after World War I. Jordan was ruled by his grandson, the late King Hussein, for 46 years until his death in 1999. Hussein's son, King Abdullah II, then assumed the throne. Jordan has grown into a modern nation that has enjoyed a significant measure of peace and economic prosperity.

Situated in the center of Amman in Jordan, the International Academy is a non-profit organization with educational and administrative policies set by the school's Board of Trustees. IA is licensed by the Jordanian Ministry of Education and prepares its students for the Jordanian National General Education Program, "Tawjihi"; the school supports the British the International General Certificate of Secondary Education IGCSE/GCE and the American Program as school completion choices.

Student enrollment during the time of the PAR was 5,329 students; administrative and teaching staff numbered 926. IA supports Islamic educational theory and practice while also adopting curricula with global standards. While the school prides itself in providing an academic education of high quality, it also attaches considerable importance to creative, physical, and community service activities and offers a wide range of facilities and opportunities in these areas. In this section, I provide an overview of the historical development of the school including the school's key milestones.

School History

Physical plant of the International Academy: IA has two well-resourced campuses. The first school was built on an 8-acre site, and a second, larger campus of 33 acres was added in 1988. The school's two mosques, one on each campus, play an important role and serve the local community as well as the school. The stadium of the International Academy was established in the 1950s and historically hosted official matches between Jordanian and international teams.

Since then, IA has expanded with many new buildings, including two gymnasiums built to international standards, the International Academy Culture Association building, the General Administration of Schools and Kindergarten, and the headquarters of the American Program.

Educational Milestones for IA

Next, I highlight the main academic milestones and expansion of academic facilities in the history of IA. Predominantly, IA serves local Jordanian families from the upper and upper-middle socioeconomic classes. Most IA parents are well-educated professionals, and a large percentage hold graduate degrees. IA served members of the Royal Family, Jordanian military families, and families of university professors, members of parliament, and ministers. IA is a highly regarded academic institution in Jordan, and its prestige is key to the future development of the school.

IA expanded educational departments and programs in the early 1980s, which led to an increase in enrollment. Worthy of mention is the Department of Academic Supervision and Educational Development and the Center of Educational Aids and Educational Techniques; both departments were founded in the 1980s. IA was one of the first schools in Jordan to establish specialized departments for educational support to oversee the education of exceptional learners, a service that is not currently available in most private schools in Jordan. The Department of Academic Supervision and Educational Development provides ongoing support for the collaborative board of principals and academic supervisors to initiate and advance school growth and employ modern educational methods. Its main task is to oversee all decisions that influence student learning, and this prompted the creation of scientific laboratories equipped with the latest facilities and the expansion of multiple libraries on both campuses.

Teacher evaluation is a central concern of the PAR project. The Department of Academic

Supervision and Educational Development drafted the current teacher evaluation system, which is based on Danielson's framework for teaching and evaluation (Danielson, 2013). The designers of the process edited certain terminology and omitted parts of the framework to better suit IA programs, and all educational programs adopted the teacher evaluation. The development of the teacher evaluation system at IA is discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

IA continued to pioneer educational growth, added programs, and built outstanding facilities to house the continued increase in student enrollment serving a multitude of educational programs. The school founded a new building for the newly established American Program and built new computer labs on both sites. IA introduced professional vocational workshops at both school sites and provided them with modern equipment to train students in carpentry, blacksmithing, and electricity. The British High School Certificate Program (GCE/IGCSE), where the PAR took place, was introduced in 2000/2001. At the beginning of 2018, IA established the International Baccalaureate (IB) program to support students with the latest educational standards, and two new buildings on campus opened for kindergarten and the primary and the British program. Recently, IA built several new facilities such as gymnasiums, multipurpose halls, a modern, Olympic-sized swimming pool, and the theaters at both sites also were refurbished. IA connected all computers across all facilities to local and international networks and computerized all of the systems in the schools of the school, especially the financial and registration systems and records of student achievement. Both campuses now offer multiple international programs and are now commensurate with the aspirations of students and their parents and in alignment with modern teaching practices.

IA has multiple accreditations, including the Healthy Schools National Accreditation, which has been conducted since 2008 with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of

Education (MOE). The accreditation project aims to create health-promoting environments within Jordanian schools that reflect positively on students' physical and social growth as well as on their academic performance.

In summary, the International Academy has a rich history in the community, and the school motto is #pride. However, the deeply rooted nature of the school's systems, history, and programs proved to be both an asset and a challenge when the CPR attempted to evaluate and question the embedded work practices. I discuss this further in relation to my role as the lead researcher.

In the following section, I revisit the meso and macro contexts as outlined in Chapter 1. At the meso level, I review the philosophical foundation guiding the International Academy, and at the macro level I present the national and bilingual context. I then introduce the five co-practitioner researchers and my role as the lead researcher. In addition, I discuss the contextual support for the focus of practice: co-constructing a meaningful evaluation for English teachers for improving practices that fully include all levels of language development at the International Schools of IA.

Philosophical Foundation: International Academy Vision & Mission

The philosophical foundations of IA are central to our work. The vision and mission communicate the school's purpose, values, and beliefs. The school is also firmly rooted in Islamic traditions and philosophical values.

Vision

IA strives to remain one of the leading educational institutions in Jordan by serving the needs of the students and their parents with strong resources and cutting-edge curricula delivered by qualified teachers within a well-established administrative system. The vision statement exemplifies our commitment to this intent:

> The International Academy creates a system that enables every student to meet or exceed rigorous standards for academic performance. All students will develop the attitudes, skills and habits of mind needed to succeed in and beyond the classroom. The members of this school share a vision of educational excellence, an appreciation for the partnerships with local agencies, community-based organizations and international institutions and will work collaboratively to realize this vision.

The vision exemplifies IA's dedication to the needs of students who not only will study and live in Jordan but are global citizens.

Mission

IA develops the academic, physical, and social needs of its students in an interconnected world. It is committed to raising balanced, highly educated, and reflective life-long learners by providing an environment that promotes Islamic values and practices while accepting and respecting the values and beliefs of other cultures. Students are empowered to be proud of their heritage, language, and history and are motivated by their sense of responsibility to embrace, benefit, and excel as communicators and risk-takers.

> *The mission of The Foreign Programs Department at the International Academy is to ensure that all students discover and develop their special talents, achieve their educational and career goals, become life-long learners, and succeed in a rapidly changing society by empowering students, parents, and staff, providing a strong standards-based curriculum and offering alternative learning experiences.*

The goal is to ensure that students graduate with knowledge, skills, and values based on the tolerant message of Islam.

National Context

The development of Jordan's educational system has been dramatic. In Jordan, the MOE accentuated access to basic education in all the country's improvement plans as early as the 1920s. As a matter of government policy, each town or community with 10 or more school-aged children is provided with a school. Therefore, even Jordanians in poor or remote areas distant from the capital, Amman, have access to education. Public education is free for primary and secondary students and compulsory for all Jordanian children through the age of 16.

By contrast, free access is not the case for private schools. Private schools are heavily taxed by the government, which makes private school tuition fees relatively high in a strained economy. Despite this, for those who can afford it, private schools continue to be favored over public schools especially because Jordanian public schools do not use British or American programs to teach English. Public schools only offer the national academic program, which is solely taught in Arabic. In addition, public school buildings do not have central heating, and the winters in Jordan are brutally cold. Furthermore, transportation for students in public schools is not provided, forcing students to walk home alone. Unfortunately, numerous disadvantaged families who cannot afford private transportation for their children pay a hefty price in road traffic deaths or injuries.

Public and Private Education in Jordan

According to a report by the Jordanian government, there are 2801 government (public) schools and 1493 private schools in the country. Private schools educate about one fourth of all Jordanian students. The majority of private schools in Jordan are for-profit; IA is the one of two private, nonprofit schools in the country. Conversely, most private schools in Jordan are affiliated with an international program, as of the 1990s, Jordan has witnessed a trend in the growth of international schools. International schools offer either the British International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) program, the International Baccalaureate IB program, or the American high school program. Unlike their public counterparts, private schools offer heated facilities and bus transport for an extra fee. The private school sector in Jordan is highly competitive. IA competes with 1,492 other private schools but has the advantage of being one of the oldest in the capital. However, the private and public-school dynamics have recently changed due to COVID-19 pandemic; it is estimated that 40,000 students moved from private to public schools in Jordan for financial reasons.

Bilingual Education in Jordan

Arabic is Jordan's official language; English is the preferred second language in the country and is widely used in education especially at the college level. Before the year 2000, Jordanian students were not taught English in primary grades in public schools. The introduction of English language education to the first through fourth grade marks a significant shift in the Jordanian public education sector.

Jordanians consider learning English to be key for improving their socioeconomic status, and many make considerable economic sacrifices to continue their graduate studies. Learning English is a prime concern for parents and educators as English skills are needed to compete in the increasingly competitive job market in the Middle East. Professionals cannot secure a well-paid job in Jordan without the ability to speak English fluently.

Jordanian students started to learn English in primary grades only 19 years ago in public schools. However, this shift did not prepare students with the proficiency required to excel at the university level or in their future professions. Consequently, private schools in Jordan offering international programs continued to see rapid growth in enrollment. Most private international schools promise a bilingual setting to help students speak English fluently. A semi bilingual educational setting should not be confused with the definition of a bilingual learner. A bilingual learner is a person who speaks two languages; bilingual students have varied degrees of fluency. A Bilingual Educational setting may be defined as a setting using "two languages as media of instruction for a child or a group of children in part or all of the school curriculum" (Cohen, 1975, p. 18). The International Schools of IA instruct core subjects in English, including mathematics, sciences, and social studies. Arabic, Islamic studies, physical education, and art are taught in Arabic. Because parents may send their children to public school for the early years and then transfer them to private, international schools later these students' mastery of English is not commensurate with those who have been at IA or other private schools from the beginning. This migration from public schools to private international schools creates a huge burden on teachers who are inadequately prepared to teach English. My conversations with the CPR group showed that this circumstance is viewed as a threat rather than an asset for the school community.

Contextual Support for FoP

Our overarching question for the focus of practice is: "How do we engage English teachers in a meaningful evaluation process for improving language development practices at all levels?" The question is a shared concern by many stakeholders in the school as well as most Jordanians. The IA Leadership Team welcomed the idea of a CPR group dedicated to improving local practices at IA. Most students at IA are either bilingual or English Language Learners. Most teachers and leaders speak English as a second language; native English speakers like me usually join the school because their families moved back to Jordan for various personal reasons. The international school system at IA does not depend on an expat community.

The ultimate challenge for private education in Jordan is the scarce pool of qualified international teachers in all subjects, particularly English Language teachers. Because teachers in Jordan have inadequate preparation programs at the university level, a large percentage of private schools must offer in-service training with the help of certified or experienced teachers educated abroad.

School Political System

International Academy has a reputation for its long-term stability, and its deep-rooted history as a school system. IA comprises two campuses housing eleven schools; each school has a principal who reports to the Director General. The Director General ensures that all schools are aligned with the College's vision, mission, and values. The school was known for its welcoming environment, minimal turnover in leadership, and "open door" communication policy. IA showed dedication to excellence and progressive change and invested heavily in the professional development of its academic staff. The eleven principals reported to the Director General, they had autonomy to make decisions concerning their schools within a hierarchal framework. All decisions were documented and signed off by the Director General.

School Principal Role and Organizational Structure

During the year of the PAR study, I was principal of the British Program at the International Academy. In that role, I determined who was hired, renewed, or dismissed. The principal also interviews new students and their parents and makes the decision on admissions. In addition, the principal has oversight over all communication with parents.

As principal, I shared the task of teacher appraisals, student data analysis, and strategic planning with the vice principals and subject leaders. The leadership team believed that "each participant holds expertise that is valuable in solving a given problem, but each also recognizes that he or she must join together with others to solve it" (Bryk et al., 2015, p. 17). The leadership team's main focus was to monitor and improve student learning at the school level and report to the school principal. It was the leadership team's duty to study student performance data, find and solve emerging problems, and suggest updates to policies and procedures for the principal to take back to the Director General for approval. The organizational policies and procedures were deeply embedded and unified among the 11 schools of IA, and changes in policy did not happen easily because of a lack of plasticity due to favoring tradition over change. Consequently, the school principal had the sensitive task of maneuvering the PAR project without seeming to challenge the systems in place. The school principal was also responsible for the management of the school, mainly the day-to-day school operations related to safety and discipline on campus.

Changes in Organizational Structure During COVID-19

An unexpected change in the school's organizational structure occurred in April 2020. The International Academy Cultural Society (ICS) appointed the ICS Secretary General as chairman; following this, the International Academy (IA) General Director resigned, and her position was eliminated. In the past 73 years, the ICS had not interfered with the operations of IA. The organization suddenly had a new chief with a new political vision. This change had ramifications for the PAR project as I was reassigned within the organization along with others. The school community was somewhat disoriented with the change in leadership while at the same time under strain due to COVID-19 pandemic. We decided, based on the current scenario, that moving ahead with a third cycle of the PAR was not possible.

PAR Project Team: Co-Practitioner Researchers and Lead Researcher

After the dissertation proposal was approved by the IA Director General, several colleagues enthusiastically agreed to become Co-Practitioner Research (CPR) partners. I invited CPR members from the English department and its leadership team: three English teachers from the primary and secondary section, a vice principal, the English department head, and myself as the lead researcher. The five (CPR) members were all English teachers and represented various grade levels from the school. Their mixed experience and teaching or leadership positions provided the PAR input from various viewpoints and experiences. The CPR members were passionate about embarking on a journey of school improvement. Longevity within the CPR team ranged from novice to many years of experience. The following is a short introduction to each CPR member.

Co-Practitioner Researchers

All participants in the PAR were bilingual Jordanian educators who speak Arabic as a first language and learned English in a bilingual or semi-bilingual setting. The CPR team was comprised of three teachers and administrators including myself. This section presents the role each CPR member plays in the organization and the role they served in the project.

SD was a third-grade homeroom teacher and taught English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. She is a doctoral student studying English linguistics. She completed her ESL student teaching in Turkey and was in her third year of teaching during the PAR. SD was the teacher advocate in the CPR group and shared many personal experiences and insights from her time in Turkey and as a linguistics student.

MA was the only male teacher in the group. He often brought practical views to the PAR conversations as an English secondary and lower secondary teacher; he taught eighth and ninth grade. MA completed his master's degree in English in the US and had experience teaching at the university level in the US. He frequently shared how teaching secondary and lower secondary students required different skills from that of a university instructor, and he graciously shared how this PAR journey has bridged the gap in his knowledge about suitable teaching practices for someone transitioning from the university setting.

RF was a fourth-grade homeroom teacher who taught English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. She was in her ninth year of teaching at the time of the PAR struggling to balance a teaching career and a budding family. She had her second child during Cycle Two, which limited her participation in some PAR activities; however, RF shared her beliefs and struggles and helped shed light on the teachers' perspectives school wide (see Table 5).

Next, I introduce the administrators in the CPR group: RJ and NK. RJ has many years of experience as a teacher but is new as English Department Head; she serves as a lead teacher in implementation of new curriculum and instructional practices aimed at improved teaching and student achievement. Department heads assist in implementation of best practices in instruction and work collaboratively with their team members. RJ meets with English teachers regularly to orient, coach, and evaluate them. She assists the team in modifying instruction to meet the needs of students. RJ is completing her second year in this role and considers this PAR an opportunity to develop her leadership.

NK was the Primary Assistant Principal. She recently graduated with a Master's in Educational Leadership from a U.S. university and had international experience as a high school teacher of English. NK generously shared many of her personal experiences during the work of the PAR and had a different lens from her colleagues due to her international experience. She

Table 5

Co-Practitioner Researchers at IA

Name	Subject Area	National Origin	Years of Teaching	Years at IA
Ms. SD	Primary English	Jordan	3	3
Ms. RJ	Middle & Secondary English HOD	Jordan	18	15
Mr. MA	Middle & Secondary English	Jordan	21	4
Ms. RF	Primary English	Jordan	9	7
Ms. NK	Primary Section Vice Principal	Jordan	19	2

worked in partnership with the Principal to oversee the management of resources effectively and equitably in the primary section. ND developed strategies with the Principal to enhance the development and implementation of teaching and learning programs relevant to the current needs of all students and anticipated learning outcomes by all primary teaching staff. In collaboration with the primary curriculum Academic Supervisor, ND was responsible for evaluating the teaching and learning programs, analyzing student outcomes, and monitoring student progress. The next section introduces my role as the lead researcher and as the school principal.

Role of Lead Researcher

As a part of my role as the school principal, I facilitated the professional development in scaffolding for Grades 1–12 international teachers and in breaking up the material into chunks for bilingual and English language learners and providing a tool or structure for each chunk. I led the school improvement journey for accreditation purposes. I had the advantage of autonomy and leverage in that I had many teachers and instructional leaders with whom to work. In the PAR project and study, I was the facilitator and lead researcher. My bilingual and bicultural background and my experience learning Arabic as a second language at the age of 8 provided me with unique insights. I shared stories from my experience both as a leader and as a learner, which helped create a welcoming environment for others to share their vulnerability with ease and grace. I worked directly with the CPR group to develop and lead original research on instructional innovation to engage teachers to improve practice, to understand inequality dynamics in language acquisition, to assist teachers in using new techniques, and to redesign the teacher evaluation process. This role called for regular conversation, interviews, observations, and learning exchanges, as well as providing guidance to CPR members. I then analyzed and reflected upon CPR activities and wrote frequent memos to capture these reflections.

As we know from the improvement sciences, “[L]earning to improve demands the active full engagement of educators. All involved are now called improvers seeking to generate strong evidence about how to achieve better outcomes” (Bryk et al., 2015, p. 9). Thus, the CPR members were committed to improving our individual and collective ability to observe, understand current beliefs related to the current evaluation process, and talk about their instructional practices. The CPR intended to collectively develop a stronger evaluation system that better meets the needs for teachers teaching bilingual learners or English Language Learners in a semi-bilingual setting. The CPR group conscientiously worked together for an entire academic year. The group’s diverse experience with teaching English supplied the PAR with a true opportunity to learn from one another and to share new insights related to the focus of practice.

Chapter Summary

Within this chapter, I explored the school context history and philosophical foundation guiding the International Academy. I then introduced the national context for bilingual private education in Jordan. I discussed the school’s organizational structure and political system supporting the focus of practice. Lastly, I introduced my role and the role of co-practitioner researchers both in the school and in the PAR project. In Chapter 4, I discuss the research design aimed at co-constructing a meaningful evaluation process that engages English teachers in improving practices that fully include all levels of language development at the International Schools of IA.

CHAPTER 4: PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of the participatory action research (PAR) study was to engage three English teachers and two administrators at the International Academy (IA) in re-imagining a more meaningful teacher evaluation process centered on improving teacher practices at all levels of language development. We believed that if educators come together to discuss and share viewpoints and perceptions relevant to the educational experience of English language teaching and learning, we can collectively improve the learning experiences of students. To accomplish this, a Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team of six members, including myself, cogenerated and implemented a meaningful teacher evaluation process for improving practice that supports a model of teacher growth and development based on the socio-cultural context of the teachers (Oakland Unified School District, 2017; Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). The three teachers in the CPR group and PAR study addressed all levels of language development in an international bilingual classroom. In this process, we (a) created a safe place for discussing existing practices related to the topic; (b) impacted the ways we share information between and among educators engaged in the process; and (c) enhanced participants' understanding of different perspectives. As we analyzed participant dialogue and other indicators of improvement leading to better and more equitable practices that fully include all levels of language development, we engaged in two iterative cycles of inquiry and made changes to our practices as we analyzed evidence from each cycle.

By utilizing the processes of Community Learning Exchanges (CLEs), I brought together teachers and instructional leaders to study how we observed and provided feedback to teachers in English teaching and learning environments (Acheson & Gall, 2003; Guajardo et al., 2016). The CLE protocols and methodology provided a useful qualitative method for collecting evidence.

We compiled artifacts from the CLE activities and analyzed their unique contributions and culturally influenced viewpoints on this subject using methods of analyzing qualitative data (Saldaña, 2016).

In this chapter, I explain the PAR research design and why it was ideal for the study context. I outline the design and methodology of the PAR study, including the overview of the PAR methodology and the selection of participants, and I introduce the two PAR cycles of inquiry. In the subsequent section on linking the questions to the data, I reiterate the research questions and how they relate to data collection instruments and data analysis methods. At the end of the chapter, I examine guided reflection and reflective practice and the possible limitations of the study.

Research Design

I designed the participatory action research (PAR) study to understand and analyze perceptions, experiences, and practices related to evaluating teaching and learning in an international bilingual context. Using the participatory action research methodology, I was successfully able to engage participants and collaborate with them in shaping the research and to build evidence from qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The PAR was an action research project because we created a democratic space in which we engaged in inquiry (Herr & Anderson, 2014). The PAR was activist research because (1) as the academic researcher—in this case, the school leader—I positioned myself as a full participant committed to attaining personal and organizational development, and (2) the goal of democratization through a PAR stance was to create more horizontal relationships among instructional leaders and teachers (Herr & Anderson, 2014; Hunter et al., 2013). I used the methodology of participatory action research to engage in successive cycles of inquiry that included data collection of group and individual focus interviews, language classroom observational data, notes from post observation conferences, meeting conversations, and analytic memos to understand participant perceptions and learning (Hunter et al., 2013; Little, 2012; Mintrop, 2016). I wrote reflective memos that led to cyclical collection of emerging codes and embedded themes in a nonlinear process (Saldaña, 2016).

I was a new practitioner within the PAR setting; therefore, I focused on establishing relationships with all the participants in the CPR group to conduct the research effectively. Relationships are critical in participatory action research because this innovative design depends on ongoing interactions and dialogue within the CPR group. We collaboratively determined what was of appropriate interest and importance in relation to the research questions as we investigated what encompasses a meaningful evaluation process for improving practice that fully includes all levels of language development (Hunter et al., 2013; Little, 2012; Mintrop, 2016).

Participants

The selection of participants was a purposeful sample (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The participants I engaged in the PAR study were instructional leaders and teachers from the English department at IA. The CPR team included one educator from each section in the school: primary, middle school, and high school. I regularly met other instructional leaders and teachers to plan whole-school initiatives concerning the English Department at the school; therefore, the PAR project was an extension of my role in the school. The CPR members had direct and ongoing contact with English teaching and learning in the school. In addition, I invited other heads of departments and vice principals to join our CLEs at their convenience once the learning exchanges were established. The selected CPR group helped organize, facilitate, and appraise the interventions as well as provide a rich source of data concerning their transformations in practice.

This is a convenience sample because these persons needed to be engaged in the same school as myself to conduct the research, namely as teachers and instructional leaders. The process involved six CPR team members; pseudonyms are used in Chapters 5–7. The criteria for extending invitations to join the CPR group were: number of years of teaching or leading experience and class levels taught or supervised. For the purpose of collecting authentic data about teaching practices, I intended to involve all levels of professional knowledge. Participants were free to withdraw at any time; one did so without concern for negative consequences.

Two Cycles of Inquiry

At the beginning of the PAR study, the CPR anticipated the end result of this journey by asking what we were looking to accomplish so that we adequately guided the questioning and made sure they would lead to rich evidence and data (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). We anticipated the need to co-create a shared narrative from a series of interconnected learning exchange activities to determine best practices for engaging English Language teachers and instructional leaders in a meaningful evaluation process for improving teaching practice.

In Table 6, I outline the two cycles of inquiry. PAR Cycle One was largely exploratory as I was in a new to the school context when I started the study; Cycle One included classroom observations to assess the level of English language teaching as well as student learning in selected classrooms. In PAR Cycle Two we looked for evidence of growth and aimed to formalize the improvements and engage in deeper academic conversation.

In reviewing the research questions and the theory of action that guided the study, I matched the research questions to the instrumentation. I follow with a detailed discussion of the PAR cycles and how I used data collection and analysis for each cycle of inquiry. Finally, I

Table 6

Activities, Personnel and Time for PAR Cycles

Activities	Key Personnel	Timeline
PAR Cycle One		
Seed and Startup The CPR began to engage in conversations to analyze the current setting and make decisions about appropriate interventions and changes to pedagogical practices. • Examine the setting and potential co-practitioners • Form co-practitioner relationships and practices for collaborative exchanges Co-create a calendar for and conduct interviews, conferences, and observations	• K-12 English Language Teachers (3) • K-12 English HODs (2) • School Leadership Team including school principal (1)	October-November 2019
PAR Cycle Two		
Growth and Establishment Maturity and Expansion of Knowledge The CPR engaged in and co-designed extensive conversations that used iterative evidence to make decisions about improvement. Strengthened co-practitioner relationships and practices for collaborative exchange • Co-created a Cycle 2 calendar for Community Learning Exchanges Engaged in observations and professional learning that supports PAR goals The CPR ritualized the improvements and engaged in academic conversation in the form of focus interviews, group meetings, class observations, and post observation conferences. Engaged in observations and professional learning that supports PAR goals Analyzed evidence and developed themes	• K-12 English Language Teachers (3) • K-12 English HODs (2) • School Leadership Team including school principal (1)	January-May 2020

introduce the technique I used to synthesize and analyze the data I collected from all sources throughout the study.

Research Questions Linked to Data Collection and Analysis

The PAR study was guided by one overarching question: How do we engage English teachers in a meaningful evaluation process for improving practice that fully includes all levels of language development? I addressed the following PAR sub-questions in depth through the CLEs in PAR Cycles One and Two:

1. To what extent do teachers improve their instructional practices for English Language learning?
2. To what extent do the English Language Heads of Departments (HODs) and instructional leaders develop the capacity (knowledge, skills, beliefs, motivation) to implement effective teacher evaluation practices?
3. How is my leadership improved through the PAR process?

In Table 7, I link the research questions to specific data collection instruments.

Theory of Action

The theory of action rests on this premise: If the CPR team can co-design a meaningful observation and evaluation process that engages English teachers and English Heads of Department (HoD), then we can improve teaching practices that fully include all levels of language development and support teachers in making decisions about improving their practices. In addition to relying on the methodologies of the improvement sciences and community learning exchange pedagogies, the CPR team and I engaged in two PAR cycles of inquiry over 10 months to purposefully co-generate and implement an evaluation process with measurable

Table 7

Data Collection Sources to Respond to Research Questions

Research Question (sub-question)	Data Source (Metrics)	Triangulated With
To what extent do teachers improve their instructional practices for English Language learning?	CLE Artifacts Meeting notes Digital reflections Interviews	Reflective & Analytic Memos
To what extent do the English Language Heads of Departments (HODs) and instructional leaders develop the capacity (knowledge, skills, beliefs, motivation) to implement effective teacher evaluation practices?	Observations Meeting notes Digital reflections Interviews	Reflective & Analytic Memos Member check
How is my leadership improved through the PAR process?	Observations Meeting Notes Digital reflections Interviews	Reflective & Analytic Memos Member check

inputs and outputs, we pursued several objectives aimed at addressing the overall impact of a reformed teacher evaluation process.

Cycles of Inquiry

The cycles of inquiry incorporated a practice known as community learning exchanges (CLE), a practice that honors the wisdom of participants and the power of place (Guajardo et al., 2016), to create a platform for school community members—teachers and instructional leaders—to come together to build new knowledge and share reflections on English language teaching and learning. According to Guajardo et al. (2016), CLEs are a participatory approach to understanding stakeholders' perceptions, and the learning exchange methodology is conducive for generating solutions from inner versus external wisdom. Next, I show the relationship of the research questions to the data collection and analysis and then discuss how the PAR cycles unfolded with the use of evidence.

PAR Cycle One: Seed and Startup (Fall 2019)

In the first PAR cycle, we established the CPR team, defined the focus of practice, and conducted the first community learning exchange (CLE). Prior to the study, I obtained informed consent from all CPR team members, certifying that they understood the benefits and risks associated with their voluntary participation in the action research study. Jointly, the CPR engaged in conversations in the form of focus group interviews, group meetings, class observations, and post-observation conversations to co-generate data which was then coded to develop categories. In the CLEs, we designed a forum for dynamic social activities and guided ongoing CLEs as the cycles of research unfolded.

Conversation was a "critical and central pedagogical process" adopted in this participatory action research and responds to the first axiom of the CLE as both a process and a methodology: learning and leadership are dynamic social processes, both for adults and for the students they teach (Guajardo et al., 2016). Documenting and coding these conversations as qualitative data was critical for the iterative changes we needed to make.

PAR Cycle Two: Maturity and Expansion (Spring 2020)

During the second cycle, we focused on teacher agency and principal conversation practices post-observation (Tredway & Argent, 2020). The post-observation conversation protocol is included in Appendix F. Community Learning Exchanges (CLEs) were a vehicle to connect axioms and strategies to further establish a shared language for ongoing reflective practice. An overarching axiom which guided this cycle of inquiry was that the people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns (Guajardo et al., 2016). Thus, in choosing the CPR group and engaging others at the school in CLEs, we were building a community of learners who better understood their context and were able to use iterative evidence to make necessary changes. To ensure that the emergent themes were consistent with CPR member experiences, I conducted a member check as another way of triangulating the evidence (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In PAR Cycle Two, I collected qualitative evidence from interviews, meetings, pre-observation planning conferences, observations, and post-observation reflective conferences and coded this evidence to determine themes (Saldaña, 2016). In the analysis of data from Cycle Two, I conducted a member check with CPR members to verify findings. While I collected the same types of evidence in both cycles, deepening our ability to use evidence to make iterative decisions to inform a stronger teacher observation and evaluation process was not absolutely evident at this point, and we wanted to be able to start to use this process more broadly in the school. However, due to a change in the school's political structure, Cycle Three of the PAR was interrupted. The nature of participatory action research is that we cannot fully predict what will happen and at what rate it will happen. As the lead researcher, I was cognizant of not rushing the process and paying attention to a pace of change that is consistent with the CPR members' inclinations and capacities.

In the process, I developed categories in PAR Cycle One and themes in PAR Cycle Two (Saldaña, 2016). From these two cycles of inquiry, I determined two key findings which are discussed in detail in Chapter 6. As indicated in Table 7, I engaged the CPR team in a final member check as a means of validation. I discuss next the pedagogical processes and provide more detail about each type of evidence I collected and analyzed.

CLE Pedagogies and Documentation

In the PAR study, I collected data to study perceptions and changes in practice as a result of participation in this PAR. "Action research aims to change the status quo by documenting the extent of some problem or by examining proposed solutions to see which might work best" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 9). The pace of the process was not fully possible to predict, and the purpose for the school community learning exchanges was to examine problems faced by those teaching English to various age groups to analyze how a meaningful evaluation model or protocol could solve them. Next, I describe the importance of guided reflection and discuss specific data collection instruments and how I analyzed each.

Guided Reflection

I used Dewey's (1909) and Freire's (1972) pedagogical frameworks as the foundation of engaging in the CLE process that provided a place for guided reflection. Freire believes teaching is a political activity. He wanted teachers to develop a critical consciousness and be ethical, democratic, critical, and progressive thinkers. Teachers need to be mindful of how societal powers imbalances inevitably generate inequities on their students resolve to overcome this predicament. Because education is a moral commitment, a teacher's most important duty is to protect the dignity of their students as human beings. They must also help develop students as critical thinkers who know and understand their world so that, like their teachers, they become citizens who can change their world. Finally, teachers cannot create critical, reformist, progressive thinkers unless they are models and agents of critical reflection and action themselves (Benade, 2016). With these ideas in mind, I wanted to respect the other administrators and teachers as co-learners in the process, and I took care to maintain a democratic, open space for dialogue and learning.

Dewey (1909) defined reflective thought as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (p. 6). I predicted that guided reflection was an influential model for mutual appreciation and empowerment in the CLEs. I used guided reflection through carefully designed questions to promote reflective practice. I demonstrated my appreciation for the CPR's work through dialogic, reflective, and focused interviews and meetings in which teachers had agency and voice in sharing their perceptions, knowledge, and struggles.

The term "reflective practice" suggests that individual change is a result of thought, perspectives, and practices that evolve. "The term 'reflective practice' carries multiple meanings that range from the idea of professionals engaging in solitary introspection to that of engaging in critical dialogue with others" (Finlay, 2008, p. 2). In the PAR reflections we used, CPR members engaged in critical dialogue in relation to the focus of practice and in frequent member checking throughout the inquiry process. Member checking, or informant feedback or respondent validation in qualitative research, is a strategy for verifying the interpretations of the

CPR's reality to ensure the authenticity, accuracy, and value of the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data Collection Instruments

In addition to the intentional and multiple occasions for reflective practices, I examined participant perceptions from recorded conversations of focus group interviews or reflective meetings, observational data, post-observation conference reflections, relevant school policy documents, and other documents we generated throughout the process. The key qualitative data that I used were: CPR meeting notes, interviews and conversations notes, classroom observations, digital reflections, document analysis, and memos.

CPR Meeting Notes. Through each cycle, I audio recorded and took meeting notes to document our discussions and activities as we conducted meetings or engaged in a community learning exchange. I coded and categorized these data to determine perceptions and changes in practice over time and the extent to which the new teacher evaluation process was associated with changes in instructional and leadership practices. When discussing potential policy or procedural changes recommended by the participants, CPR meetings included members from the Leadership Team comprising the School Principal, vice principals, and department heads. The notes reflected actions we took based on the recommendations. These reflective meetings helped the CPR team "recapture practice experiences and mull them over critically in order to gain new understandings and so improve future practice. This is understood as part of the process of life-long learning" (Finlay, 2008, p. 1).

Interviews. CPR group members were "conversational partners" involved in discussions about subjects of interest to our work as teachers and administrators. However, in-depth interviews provided an opportunity to obtain specific information from certain individuals, which

I coded, categorized, and analyzed (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Saldaña, 2016). Following each cycle of inquiry, I interviewed each participant in a structured interview to elicit his or her feedback about the teacher evaluation process. The questions for the interviews and meetings used exploratory verbs for reflection and storytelling and sought to elicit the essence of an experience (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The interview included primarily open-ended questions that began with “How?” or “Why?” reflecting the design of the research sub-questions. CPR members participated in the formulation of the questions, which were carefully structured “to obtain convincing results from a responsive interviewing project” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The key in the PAR research was to carefully examine what we have already learned and alter what we asked and of whom in order to better pursue iteratively the ways we could alter our practices.

Throughout both cycles, I audio-recorded and digitally stored the interviews. Then, I coded them to develop categories to assist the CPR group in uncovering emerging themes to guide future CLE actions (Saldaña, 2016). I will keep the data secured for a period of 3 years.

Classroom Observations. Throughout both action research cycles, I observed the three teachers. Gall and Acheson (2013) describe a useful or meaningful observation as “valid, objective, and recorded” (p. 107). The classroom observation recordings were a major component for CPR dialogue and informed next steps in the PAR cycles (see Appendix E). I used open coding and pre-determined codes for classroom practices.

Digital Reflections. As a research practitioner, I digitally recorded memos and reflections about the research journey to help assess my growth as a leader during the cycles of inquiry. Digital reflection provides a “process that that allows participants to be reflective, appreciative of others, and action oriented" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 101). I transcribed and coded the digital reflections, using an open coding process, and then used codes to develop categories. The digital reflections were used to triangulate the other evidence.

Memos. As a research practitioner, I journaled the action research journey through memos. Memos are reflective journals that support the study with a rich narrative depicting the development of the evaluation tool (Saldaña, 2016). I later used the reflective memos following insightful interviews and focus groups to triangulate the data and evidence. Reflective memos tracked teacher engagement or changes in practice in response to the reinvented evaluation process developed as a result of this PAR.

For data collection and analysis, I examined the participant perceptions from recorded conversations via focus interviews or reflective meetings, raw observational data from classroom visits, and relevant school policy documents. The key qualitative data sources that I employed in this action research study encompassed CPR meeting notes, interviews and conversations notes, classroom observation recordings, digital storytelling, document analysis, and memos.

Confidentiality

I maintained the confidentiality and security of data collected and analyzed during the course of the study. In addition, I stored digitally all transcriptions and recordings of interviews, meeting notes, and memos, which were password protected to one device to which no one but myself has access. All participants are described with pseudonyms in this study. Participants signed an informed consent form and were able to withdraw their participation in the study at any time (see Appendix D.) I am CITI certified and have completed all coursework required by East Carolina University Institutional Review Board.

Study Limitations

I am a member of the international school community in which the PAR study took place, and I came into this project with previously established notions about the perspectives of participants and current processes for evaluating English teachers. I continually examined my understandings and reactions as part of this study to maintain the objectivity and validity of this study. My position as an insider helped me establish relationships with the CPR group and maintain an objective yet critical dialogue. Kirk and Miller (1986) explore the meaning of valid qualitative research and proclaim that the “objectivity of a piece of qualitative research is evaluated in terms of the reliability and validity of its observations” (p. 13), the analysis of decisions made throughout the study were documented and presented to maintain validity.

I was an instructional leader and the school principal and therefor was perceived, to some degree, as an overseer and administrator. My role may have inhibited the conversations related to the research at times; however, I established a safe place for conversation with the CPR group. Another important consideration was to carefully design the questions guiding the ongoing dialogue taking place in the CLEs.

Time limitations and fear of commitment prevented certain members of the school community from agreeing to participate in the CLEs. Therefore, when recruiting participants and when facilitating the CLEs, it was of utmost importance that the CPR team and I establish a shared commitment to make the CLE a safe space in which we will work together on teacher evaluation and demonstrate appreciation for the importance of the work conducted to encourage CPR members’ long-term commitment. Although the process was limited to its specific context, it could be adapted to other schools.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I outlined the research methodology and the plan of action with a team of co-practitioner researchers to co-generate a meaningful evaluation process for improving practices that fully include all levels of language development. In my role as a principal and as an instructional leader, I facilitated the process as lead researcher. In Chapter 5, I describe the processes and analysis of the first PAR cycle in detail; as a CPR team, we developed categories from the qualitative evidence that became findings in Chapter 6 from the second PAR cycle. In Chapter 7, I present claims that emerged from the qualitative data sources described in this chapter and collected in analyzed in two cycles of inquiry.

CHAPTER 5: PAR CYCLE ONE

In the participatory research (PAR), I aimed to reinvent the evaluation process at the International Academy (IA) by engaging a group of instructional leaders and English language teachers in. The purpose of the participatory action research was to cogenerate equitable practices for language development through a meaningful evaluation process. In this chapter I outline the process in which five co-practitioner research team members, including myself, assessed the evaluation appraisal process at International Academy to determine how we could convert it to one that would support the growth and development of teachers by employing more equitable practices for language advancement. To accomplish the goal, CPR members analyzed the current IA evaluation tool and identified possible revisions for a more meaningful evaluation process.

In addition to the PAR goal, part of my task for the first cycle of inquiry was to take the reins, so to speak, as the principal and form trusting relationships with the staff. The fall semester was my first full semester at the school as a principal, and I had to proceed with care as I learned about the school and cultivated trusting relationships before pushing ahead with changes.

In the first section, I describe the activities and evidence of PAR Cycle One: meetings with the CPR team members, classroom observations (formal and informal), conferences about classroom observations with CPR team members, and reflective memo writing. The CPR team members and I met weekly for 45 minutes. I facilitated a group reflection on the following question: To what extent do the English Language Heads of Departments (HODs) and instructional leaders develop the capacity (knowledge, skills, beliefs, motivation) to implement effective teacher evaluation practices? This activity was an opportunity to draw on the wisdom of the people who were closest to the issue.

Next, I present the preliminary codes and categories from the analysis of the PAR Cycle One. Using the coding process in PAR Cycle One, I explored the process, beliefs, and current evaluation practices for English language teachers at IA. I address the evidence from preliminary observations and piloting the Effective Conversations Guide (Tredway, 2019) as a protocol or process of conversation. In the second section, I explain the implications for the focus of practice, the research questions, my leadership actions, and PAR Cycle Two.

PAR Cycle One Process

In this section, I describe the activities in which co-practitioner research (CPR) team and I examined and analyzed the current evaluation process for English language teachers at IA and the participants' beliefs about it. Secondly, I detail the evidence from the first cycle to determine emerging categories (Saldaña, 2016).

Activities

The participatory action research included dialogue, action, and reflection that took place from October 2019 through the beginning of February 2020 (see Table 8). PAR Cycle One included a range of activities: reflective meetings, classroom observations, and post-observation conversations. The PAR actions and reflections were participatory and dialogical in which a high degree of interaction and reciprocity were important to the experiences of the group; the weekly meetings provided continuity that supported the ongoing conversations (Dewey, 1909). Our ultimate goal was to bring about change in practices to support English Language teachers that, in turn, might inform the evaluation process. Using the PAR process, we were able to co-create and ensure a safe place to challenge procedures and current practices that were embedded in the school culture. In a space free from power struggles, judgement, or daily work restraints, the CPR members analyzed and re-imagined their practices.

Table 8

Activities and Evidence: PAR Cycle One (September – December 2019)

	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8	WEEK 9	WEEK 10	WEEK 11	WEEK 12	Winter Break
Meetings with CPR	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		
Classroom Observations (Informal)					●	●					
Post-Observation Conference						●	●				
Co-observations with Vice Principal or Department Head (Formal)								●	●		
Reflective Memos				●	●	●	●	●	●		

In seven meetings, the CPR explored the process, beliefs, and current practices related to the existing evaluation process for English language teachers at IA. I facilitated the meetings and asked CPR members about their understandings of the history and process of evaluation at IA. We agreed that CPR members would share viewpoints about the process and system but would not refer to individuals. All CPR members, including two primary English teachers, a secondary English teacher, English department head, primary vice principal, and myself as the principal, attended the meetings.

Classroom observations followed by conversations were not a typical practice at IA; thus, during PAR Cycle One, I experimented with the CPR teachers to see what process we might use. During three consecutive weeks (Weeks 6–8 in the middle of the first cycle), I conducted four unannounced classroom observations. In the weeks following (Weeks 8–10), I facilitated post-observation conversations with two teachers using the questioning protocol or process of conversation adopted from Effective Conversations Guide (Tredway & Argent, 2020). The observations were largely experimental, and although I recorded audio of all the sessions and observations, each teacher decided whether I would use the transcription as a part of the evaluation process. Two teachers declined because they thought the observations did not show them at their best. Because I was engaging them and forming new relationships, comfort was more important than evidence. In addition, I was experimenting with the process of evidence-based observation and shared that I was new at this type of observation.

Writing reflective memos is the act of recording what the researcher is observing from the meetings, data, and experiences. I completed a memo after coding an observation or CPR activity. Memo writing was contemplative and a spiraling practice of reflection to make sense of the unfolding codes and categories from the data. I revisited memos to add or delete notes; the memos evolved and increased in complexity, clarity, and accuracy as I progressed with coding and analyzing the data. I focused the memo writing for PAR Cycle One on triangulating the evidence related to CPR members' beliefs about teacher evaluation.

Evidence

In this section, I describe emerging categories generated from the evidence. The coding process in PAR Cycle One was exploratory in nature, and I aimed to connect or link evidence as I proceeded. In the process, I developed codes to help me understand the current English language teachers' appraisal process, beliefs, practices, and actions and the main apprehensions teachers had about these practices. I then describe in detail the outcome of employing a questioning protocol for reflection in the post-observation conversation and how it engendered a shift in attitude towards teacher evaluation.

The analytical narrative covers four categories that emerged from the data: (1) the current evaluation system; (2) standard evaluation practices at IA and teachers' beliefs and apprehensions about these practices; (3) the leader's role in evaluation; (4) and facilitating post-observation conversations.

Initial Teacher Analysis of the IA Evaluation System

How do we engage English teachers in a meaningful evaluation process for improving practice that fully includes all levels of language development? In the first three PAR meetings, I asked questions to better understand the experiences and beliefs concerning the meaning and usefulness of the existing IA teacher evaluation system. CPR members did not know the source of the IA evaluation standards. I asked many administrative personnel outside the CPR, and no one had an answer. By chance, I was conversing with the Islamic Cultural Society Secretary General, and she informed me that the evaluation was based on the Danielson Framework for

Teaching Evaluation Instrument (Danielson, 2013). However, Danielson never intended the framework to be turned into a checklist and become what it has become*:* “I'm deeply troubled by the transformation of teaching from a complex profession requiring nuanced judgment to the performance of certain behaviors that can be ticked off on a checklist” (Danielson, 2016). An alternative to Danielson’s evaluation framework is the Hawley tool, which I discuss more completely in PAR Cycle Two. This understanding was the prerequisite to co-generating a meaningful evaluation process for all levels of language development.

The CPR group communicated three main beliefs about the evaluation process. Firstly, they reported that the current evaluation system is a set of checklists to generate teacher scores rather than a meaningful process that results in improvement. One said, “Knowledge of teacher evaluation criteria does not affect teacher practice or performance” (LK, CPR meeting 1, October 9, 2019). Secondly, CPR members described the current evaluation structure as hierarchal, judgmental, and one-sided. CPR members perceived that the evaluation did not acknowledge teacher voice and depended solely on the observer’s opinion. Wragg et al. (1996) describes this type of observation as “high inference” in which the observer uses subjective judgement. Our goal was to move to low-inference observations that did not rush to judgment (Toch & Rothman, 2008). Finally, the evaluation process “lacked authentic leader-teacher communication to establish trust” (LK, CPR Meeting 1 notes, October 9, 2019).

CPR members concurred that the evaluation system was unclear in terms of the language used and did not improve teacher practice. A shared impression was that the evaluation document was “too lengthy and not user-friendly” (LK, Meeting 2 notes, October 23, 2019). They concluded that it was a superficial practice because the tool was based on a few fleeting classroom visits in which the administrator checks boxes. CPR members shared that they believed the purpose of the evaluation was not intended for improvement. Rather, the process was a formality, a yearly or twice-yearly cautious visit, culminating in a form completed with a numerical average at the bottom of the paper. CPR members wished for a more authentic and informal observation that would generate suggestions and redirection.

The tool served as a *pro forma* example of evaluation (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). CPR members shared that the feedback they received as a result of the evaluation was incomplete and judgmental and. did not reflect the complete picture of the effectiveness of their teaching nor support teachers' development. Instead, they felt they were being evaluated for their level of English fluency rather than their language instruction practices. For example, these were the types of gaps: language error correction and opportunities for students to articulate their thinking in the second language were not included in the IA evaluation.

In summary, CPR members believed that the IA evaluation tool was a simplistic "one size fits all" tool that lacked purpose and was ineffective (LK, CPR Meeting 1 notes, October 9, 2019). Next, I address standard evaluation practices for all teachers and subject areas at IA and the existing evaluation framework performance indicators translated into value-added measures (VAMs) and scores.

Teacher Beliefs and Apprehensions Regarding Evaluation at IA

International Academy used a teacher evaluation system based on the Danielson (2013) framework for teaching. The IA evaluation tool included several performance indicators: academic observation by HOD, principal or vice principal observation, student achievement, awards, penalties or reprimands, completed projects, and teacher professional learning (see Figure 7). However, instead of using the Danielson framework as a guide, IA interpreted or translated the framework into value-added measures (VAMs) or scored growth measures. The

Figure 7. Key performance indicators used to measure teacher performance in 2019–2020 academic year.

evaluation comprised multiple observations that resulted in ratings that led to a cumulative annual evaluation. CPR members reported that the final score was a decisive factor for renewing annual contracts. CPR members focused on how teacher professional learning and student performance outcomes dictated by the IA teacher evaluation tool via a numerical point system (Kayed, Memo 3, October 30, 2019). Two standard evaluation practices were especially troubling for the CPR members.

Connecting Teacher Professional Learning to Teacher Evaluation. IA links evaluation and teacher professional learning (TPL) has caused much of the professional development pursued by IA teachers to be superficial for two reasons: teachers attend professional learning opportunities only to accumulate points for the evaluation, and the sessions are neither content-focused nor goal-oriented. Teachers gain points for their year-end score based on attendance at professional learning whether or not they have absorbed new knowledge or applied it. CPR team members believed that the evaluation point system wasted valuable resources and time. CPR members described teacher professional learning at IA as a formality: “It's for the sake of counting, getting points, ticking boxes” (LK, meeting notes, October 30, 2019). In addition, the criteria for administrative approval for TPL was somewhat unclear to CPR members, “So many teachers just go to any project or to any conference so that they will be counted as points (for the evaluation). Completing TPL has become a formality to tick boxes off the evaluation.”

In addition to being superficial, CPR members described teacher professional learning from a deficit point of view: “We don't see it (TPL) as growth. We see it as a make-up for something that is lacking in us. That's how our culture views professional development” (LK, meeting notes, October 30, 2019). They said that teachers learn best during collaborative planning time such as department meetings “as teachers exchange their experiences from the classroom, teaching (each other) different (language learning) skills” (LK, meeting notes, October 30, 2019).

Connecting Student Achievement to Teacher Evaluation. CPR members agreed that using student test scores to evaluate teachers was unfair. (Table 9 explains the calculation of teacher evaluation points based on student achievement.) Student test results do not actually reflect teacher effectiveness and are not an indicator of a teacher’s effect on students’ academic progress. In addition, the evaluation point system might wrongfully reward or penalize teachers for the cohort of students they receive as students are assigned to teachers with no specific criteria other than class size. CPR members mentioned that the influx of new students who are approaching fluency in English affects the class or cohort collective average, which is a performance indicator in the teacher evaluation. “You feel that you are blamed for something you can't control.” (MS, meeting notes, October 30, 2019). CPR members proposed instead that student progress be factored into their evaluation rather than on examination results that may not reflect the quality of teaching. (RJ, Meeting 3, October 30, 2019). In summary, teachers believe the use of student achievement data to determine teacher performance is unfair because they are being evaluated for something they cannot control; they believe evaluating teacher impact on student growth to be a fair replacement for this performance indicator (RJ, Meeting 3, Octobe 30, 2019).

The IA evaluation policy framework uses value-added measures (VAMs) and scores. The evaluation policy states that the teacher effect indicator is one of the most important indicators of students' performance, and therefore student achievement is factored into the teacher evaluation. In the IA’s teacher evaluation tool, there are two VAMs factored into the teacher evaluation for

Table 9

Calculation of Teacher Evaluation Points Depending on Student Achievement at IA

Summative collective student group point average	Gained or lost points in teacher evaluation	Achievement Rate (percentage of students who passed)	Gained or lost points in teacher evaluation
92	+24	100%	+20
85	+10	92%	+4
82	+4	90%	0
80	0	86%	-8
75	-10	75%	-30
60	-40	72%	-36

each student group: first, the final collective student group average is calculated: the teacher receives 2 additional appraisal points for each collective point average above 80%; similarly, for each point per student group that collectively scores below 80%, the teacher loses 2 appraisal points.

Second, students' collective success or passing rate is calculated as follows: 90% per class group is a turning point whereby 2 teacher appraisal points are gained by the teacher for each point above 90% in external exams whereas 2 teacher appraisal points are eliminated for each point below 90% (see Table 9).

CPR members made several suggestions about the rating system. They suggested that new student test scores should be eliminated and that teacher scores be based on growth metrics between the teachers' scores from the year prior. RF suggested that "there should be a separate intensive program for low achievers (in English) and a separate teacher for that" (RF, CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019). I directly noted in a memo that it will be one of the PAR's purposes to help CPR members see English Language Learners positively through an asset lens rather than a threat to their evaluation (LK, CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019). IA acknowledges that many variables can impact students' learning; thus, the students' performance cannot solely be attributed to the role of the teacher. Despite this acknowledgement, IA continues to use student test scores without comparing the scores for the same students in previous test years. Currently, policymakers in the Ministry of Education in Jordan have announced that the existing teacher evaluation system is being overhauled in an attempt to improve teaching quality in the country; however, the discussion of equity remains absent when compared with the federal, state, and local policymakers in the United States. This poses an opportunity for policy makers at IA to revamp the evaluation tool.

Further Apprehensions Regarding Evaluation Practices at IA. In Meeting 3, CPR members elaborated on several other concerns regarding the current IA evaluation tool. CPR members deemed connecting student achievement and teacher professional learning to teacher evaluation as their main trepidations. In addition to the aforementioned concerns, CPR members also discussed lack of evaluation consistency, absence of teacher voice, and lack of relational trust. The lack of consistency stems from the fact that teachers are evaluated by multiple evaluators, and each evaluate according to their own lens.

The vice principal in the CPR group shared her concerns about the lack of consistency; she said that the evaluation system at IA depends on the respective leaders' values and beliefs. She confirmed that she is "not here to challenge teachers or penalize them" (NK, Meeting 2, October 23, 2019). As a statement of her personal belief and values, she wanted to shift the evaluation mindset to a growth model. CPR members agreed that, to build teacher/leader trust, values and beliefs about evaluation needed to be discussed openly and aligned before co-constructing a meaningful teacher evaluation.

CPR members agreed that the evaluation did not acknowledge teacher voice and depended solely on the observer's opinion. CPR members expressed that "we want to be involved in our evaluation, not to feel like I'm being, you know, judged by someone, and they control my fate" (LK, Meeting 3 notes, October 30, 2019). CPR members shared that they believed teacher voice as a source for teacher accountability rather than a hierarchical evaluation is meaningful and engaging. NK elaborated: "Evaluation is a very powerful tool that will help reshape the school culture."

In addition, CPR members expressed that the existing evaluation form actually caused anger and frustration because the evaluation encouraged competition rather than collaboration amongst teachers. RF stated that "it makes me feel angry." NK revealed that "the word *compete* is actually stated in the evaluation policy. The exact quote is that *the teachers will compete against other teachers in the same department*." CPR members agreed that this created mistrust leading to a noncollaborative school culture (LK, Meeting 2 notes, October 23, 2019). Table 10 depicts CPR beliefs and apprehensions concerning current evaluation practices.

Given all these issues about the evaluation process, the CPR team felt that although some components of the current evaluation could be useful, the process needed to be overhauled to be effective for their growth and development.

The Role of the Leader as Evaluator

In the November 2019 meeting, I asked CPR members to answer two questions about the appropriate role of the leader as evaluator: (1) How do we engage English teachers in a meaningful evaluation process for improving practice that fully includes all levels of language development? (2) How can the English language HODs and instructional leaders develop the capacity (knowledge, beliefs, skills, motivation) to implement effective teacher evaluation practices? I sought through these questions to better understand my role as leader and evaluator by clarifying meaningful evaluation practices as well as desired leadership qualities in the evaluator from the CPR's perspective (see Table 11).

Meaningful Evaluation Practices. CPR members suggested that a meaningful evaluation would be based on open communication between leaders and teachers that used evidence-based feedback based on what they called "authentic" classroom evaluations. When I asked CPR members what they meant by an "authentic" evaluation, they described continuous, informal visits and suggestions rather than yearly or twice-yearly summative evaluations culminating in a numerical grade. One teacher on the CPR team suggested an "unofficial teacher

Table 10

Teacher Beliefs about Current Evaluation at IA

Teacher Beliefs	Instances
Lack of Clarity	5
Lack of applicability to English teachers	2
Judgmental	3
Superficial	4
Unfair	2
Lengthy document	2
Purpose of evaluation is not for teacher improvement	1

Table 11

Responses and Instances of Occurrence in Meetings about Role of Leader as Evaluator

Effective Instructional Leadership Qualities and Practices

Leadership Quality	Instances	Percentage
Principal influences teacher growth positively by empowering educators in the building	3	11%
The role of a leader is to coach, not tell	9	29%
Effective communicator	3	11%
Conducts informal observations to improve language	5	17%
Leader is knowledgeable and exhibits qualities of lifelong learner	4	13%
Reinforces relational trust	6	19%
Total	31	100%

evaluation where teachers' classes are observed multiple times for (teaching) different skills in language" (LK, CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019).

CPR members said that a meaningful evaluation would support the teacher with content-specific guidance by which they meant the academic dialogue or conversation between the evaluator and the teacher. RF elaborated: "Leaders must have enough time to address all aspects [of teaching] and must individualize instructions [feedback] and not generalize". RJ added that "conversations from Head of Department to teacher should suggest, not enforce solutions", and NK added: "The leader must strive to understand the core values of teachers and what drives them to do their best." CPR members emphasized that the role of the leader is to coach, not tell. (LK, CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019). CPR members advocated for teacher voice as a source for teacher accountability rather than a hierarchical evaluation for the evaluation to be meaningful: "We want to be involved in our evaluation, not to feel like I'm being, you know, judged by someone. And they control my fate" (NK, meeting notes, October 30, 2019). Conversations and dialogue build trust and remove barriers between teachers and leaders (LK, Memo 6, November 30, 2019).

Effective Leader as Evaluator. On November 27, 2019, we conducted our closing meeting for Cycle One (see Figure 8). CPR members shared their definitions of effective instructional leaders/evaluators and meaningful evaluative practices in a CPR meeting. Instructional leaders can improve their leadership effectiveness by understanding what teachers want from them. In fact, this PAR suggests the ability to consider teacher perspectives, appreciate teacher expectations, and draw important lessons from ongoing transparent dialogue are all qualities of worthy instructional leadership. CPR members believed that it is rare from their experience for a leader to improve teacher capacity and instructional practices because of

Figure 8. Closing meeting for Cycle One: Grouping CPR members' definitions of effective instructional leaders and meaningful evaluative practices.

the structure of evaluation which is judgmental; however, they did believe that a leader’s trust improves teacher capacity and instructional practices.

CPR members insisted that an effective instructional leader establishes trust and facilitates the acquisition of knowledge. Communication is a core quality and key factor in building relational trust between instructional leaders and teachers. Said one: “A leader him/herself must be competent and resilient enough to lead and willingly listen to his/her staff and create a professional atmosphere built on understanding and trust.” They added that how a leader communicates is key: “A leader must adjust to different communication styles when talking to different teachers.”

Relational trust is built from constructive interpersonal social exchanges that take place between instructional leaders and teachers. CPR members cautioned that the teacher-leader relationship “should not be based on fear.” NK described a previous principal who inspired her and had a dramatic impact on her teaching career: “He believed in me. He would say, ‘You can do it. I trust you. I know you. You're doing brilliant things.’ He noticed the small things. Praised me all the time, supported me” (LK, CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019).

According to the CPR, empathy and autonomy were also core qualities in an effective evaluator. CPR members emphasized that an empathetic leader “must put himself in the teacher’s shoes and understand the obstacles teachers face.” CPR members also described a successful leader as a person who listens and facilitates and embraces autonomy. RJ described an effective leader as one who “influences teacher growth positively by empowering educators.” I found this input to be noteworthy as the CPR members here directly state that autonomous leadership encourages teachers to take responsibility for their own learning. This is an important piece of evidence as our goal was to elicit teacher input for future improvement goals (Tredway, 2019), and the autonomy encouraged by the leader and exercised by the teachers in the PAR work requires a trusting, and safe environment. (LK, CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019).

CPR members believed that it was the instructional leader's responsibility to facilitate meaningful teacher professional learning opportunities. They defined meaningful opportunities as timely, self-directed, and relevant to the teacher's role. CPR members stated that qualities that make for enjoyable, motivating, and memorable teacher learning include timely, self-directed, and relevant teacher learning. (LK, Meeting 3 notes, October 30, 2019; CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019). CPR members described an effective leader as someone who has high expectations for teachers and helps teachers learn from the successes and shortcomings of their instruction. They also mentioned that instructional leaders need to be a source of knowledge to be motivating. NK elaborated, saying: "You cannot change when everyone wants you to deliver and holds you to high expectations. And because my principal had high expectations of me, I delivered and had high expectations of the students, and it was contagious" (CPR Meeting 7 notes, November 27, 2019).

Facilitating Post-Observation Conversations

Next, I present the three parts of facilitating the preliminary observations and post-observation conversations: (1) conducting evidence-based observations; (2) analyzing observational evidence for post-observation conversations; and (3) an analysis of the post-observation process. I had ample training in preparation to be a principal, but I had no training in conducting meaningful post-observation conversations. Therefore, I narrate a detailed description of the process of employing a new observation tool.

Before I visited a teacher, I did not directly plan the lesson with the teacher; lessons were collaboratively preplanned in department groups and resulted in a detailed pacing guide during the summer. I did, however, talk to both teachers about the tool I would use for the observation. I made it clear that the teacher had the option to have the observation counted towards the annual evaluation or not. I recorded the observation with permission, coded ten minutes in great detail, and documented the actions I observed before holding a post-observation conference with the teacher. In writing the memo, I had to be aware of possible omission bias and only recorded observed actions important to language learning, using the selective verbatim process (Acheson & Gall, 2003).

During the observation, I used a questioning protocol that helped me shift from spending most of my cognitive energy on taking extensive notes to watching for key "teaching points" in each visit. During my visits to the classrooms, I focused on key teaching points from these choices: how the teacher called on students; academic dialogue including the kinds of questions the teacher used: assessment vs. advancement questions; and translanguaging. Next, I present the details of two observation. In preparation for the initial implementation of the questioning protocol adopted from the Conversation Guide (Tredway, 2019), I opted not to use the IA evaluation tool, which may cause the teacher to be distracted or feel threatened and focused on the quality of the post-observation conversation (see Table 12 for observational evidence).

Teacher 1 Observational Data. I conducted the first observation in a fourth-grade classroom on a rainy day; the 24 students were anxious and mentioned many times during class that they did not play outside due to the weather. Although their primary language as well as the teacher's is Arabic, English is supposed to be the language of the class. Students were seated in groups of four facing each other. RF successfully redirected the students' attention to the task at hand and engaged them in an ongoing dialogue about how to form sentences showing cause and effect. Cause and effect are academic language functions that must be taught explicitly in an ELL

Table 12

Example of Observation Evidence Used for Post-Observation Conversations

Observed Teacher Actions	Instances Obs. 1	Instances Obs. 2
Assessment Questions	10	27
Advancing Questions	7	1
Think Time	3	2
Calling on strategy	8	32
Students engaged in academic discussion	35	35
Teacher Translanguaging	0	0
Student Translanguaging	2	1

classroom. Using the calling-on strategy for observations, RF called on students eight times using their names but also gave them a chance to volunteer to answer by raising their hands. The teacher later shared that she simply called on those who she thought knew the answer; nonetheless, all students in the classroom participated in class.

Student use of dialogue proved to be a strength as students engaged in academic discussion/dialogue (student to teacher) facilitated by teacher questioning 35 times in 10 minutes; however, after taking a second look at the data, students did talk to each other in Arabic during collaborative work, and the teacher forcefully reminded them twice to only use English. During observations, I was particularly interested in questioning; questioning can engage different levels of thinking and different levels of language. Through *assessing* questions, the teacher can clarify what the student understands or knows; by using *advancing* questions, the teacher can move students beyond their current thinking by pressing students to extend what they know in a new context. I planned to analyze the frequency and use of assessing questions compared to advancing questions. Teacher 1 asked students 10 assessment questions and seven advancing question in 10 minutes. RF used think-time three times during instruction, and students had multiple opportunities to converse and try to think in English.

I used these observational data for the post-observation conversation. As an instructional leader, planning to observe specific teaching points was a shift in practice for me. Rather than observing for evidence to justify a number given on an evaluation form, I was focused on my end goal, which was to help the teacher intentionally improve practice to engage all levels of language development in the classroom.

Teacher 2 Observational Data. Teacher 2 is a tenured teacher at IA and the English Department Head. As an instructional leader, I wanted to have meaningful insights into RJ's practice and, for myself, I wanted to practice using the processes in the Effective Conversations Guide (Tredway & Argent, 2020). The observation was in a 10th-grade class of 18 students; students were sitting in rows but then paired up once the teacher explained the task to them. Students were practicing for the external Cambridge English-Speaking Examination. Each pair of students received a speaking prompt on an index card and had time to discuss best responses and jot down notes to present to the class. After each pair presented, RJ would question students about their responses to the speaking prompt for a deeper understanding and. She asked students to predict possible challenges in the speaking exam, which led to quite an interesting discussion on how students would respond if they were asked about the rights of Palestinian people. Students were engaged and voiced their beliefs in English.

RJ used the student name at the start of the question two times; she used the student name at the end of the question two times, and once in the middle of the question. I wanted to understand during the post-observation conversation if calling on students was a random act or intentional for equitable language engagement; in any case, all students in the classroom participated in class. RJ pointed to students as a call-on strategy 28 times in 10 minutes. Students volunteered answers a few times. Students engaged in academic discussion/dialogue (student-to-student and student-to-teacher) facilitated by teacher questioning 35 times in 10 minutes.

During the observation process, I looked for assessing v/s advancing questions, think-time, and translanguaging. RJ asked students 27 assessing questions and one advancing question in 10 minutes. RJ used think time for students to rehearse answers in the beginning of class, appropriate for an ELL class. She used think-time for 30 seconds for assessing questions; however, for the one advancing question there was no think time but rather multiple follow-up questions to prompt a well-thought-out answer. I planned to discuss in the post-observation conversation the teacher's use of advancing questions to engage various levels of language proficiency in the classroom. Translanguaging, the use of language 1 to support the learning of language 2, can be a powerful tool for emergent bilinguals, but it evidently went against the beliefs of RJ who is trained to support emergent bilinguals by drilling the intricacies of the second language. I observed for translanguaging but did not address it in the post observation conference; I deferred this topic to PAR Cycle Two. RJ did not employ translanguaging at all; students used it spontaneously and often in collaborative discussions despite being warned by the teacher not to do so as using Arabic in the external Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language examination would count against them. Table 12 presents a summary of the observation evidence used for post-observation conversations.

Post-Observation Conversation Protocol. Providing an experienced and distinguished teacher with valued and meaningful feedback after an observation is not easy. Teacher 2, RJ, in the observational notes, was an outstanding teacher with 17 years of experience. The questioning protocol adopted from Conversation Guide (Tredway & Argent, 2020) helped me ask meaningful, non-judgmental questions that were thought-provoking for RJ even though she was a seasoned and knowledgeable teacher. The Conversation Guide helped me build confidence in RF as she was proud that she had a balanced approach to assessing and advancing questions during instruction. The following is a detailed narrative of their responses in the post-observation.

Teacher 1 Response to Post-Observation Conversation. I started the post-conference conversation with RF with a greeting and a short chat about our families in Arabic I believe casual conversation is needed to break barriers and set a comfortable and trusting atmosphere. We then shifted to English, and I started off by stating the purpose of our conversation and asking RF what practices she believed supported language learning in her classroom. She was silent for a minute and seemed hesitant, so I encouraged her by assuring her that I had observed many such practices. She then mentioned three practices she believed helped build students' capacities: (1) asking students to use a word in a meaningful sentence; (2) asking students to summarize a paragraph or a story; and (3) using word collocations explicitly. Teaching word collocations, that is, showing students how words occur together, helps ELL learners group words and phrases correctly. I did not observe for this cognitive task and realized that I should polish my own observational skills by intentionally assessing language demands in the classroom. I decided to adapt the Effective Conversations Guide and add a part to assess during instruction in PAR Cycle Two. Language demands include the structure being taught, unique linguistic features, language functions, and tiered content-specific vocabulary used in an instructional task. The use of the Effective Conversations Guide (Tredway & Argent, 2020) helped me understand how I could improve as an evaluator. Had I been narrating the observational data and informing the teacher of what I observed—as I did in post evaluation conferences before embarking on this PAR—I would not have had this opportunity to listen to the teacher and look inward as a leader.

I then proceeded to ask RF to describe an asset in her teaching. She immediately responded, "I think I'm kind of fair with students, yes, and I insist on being very fair with students." I asked her to elaborate on what being fair with her students meant. She said, "I don't let my students interrupt each other at all. This is one of the things that I don't like, especially if I pick a student to answer. I like them to communicate and share ideas, but I really respect that it's the student's turn and it's the student's chance to answer."

I asked RF how she called on students; this question made her think. She said that she tried to pick students who were not focusing on the class, to draw their attention. She mentioned that whom she calls on depends on the question itself. Sometimes she starts with the fluent students to expose other students to a model answer. She shared that at other times she called on students who, she felt, did not understand. RF emphasized that she does her best to call on all the students to give them equal opportunities to participate and that it doesn't work out all the time. She admitted to calling on students who knew the answer when she was pressed for time and that she should intentionally avoid this.

RF was proud of the fact that she asked a fair number of advancing questions rather than assessment questions. She asserted that she enjoys challenging her students and that she uses questioning to engage different students at their different language levels to build confidence and encourage them to use the English language without fear.

I asked RF what she would like to improve as a teacher. She said that she should give students the opportunity to read out loud in class more often and thought that she should relate the concept (cause and effect) to real life examples rather just relying on the text. Maybe I should have asked each pair of students to come up with a sentence that has a cause and an effect. I should have given them cards to categorize (cause and effect) or had students make a story through an activity to make sure they mastered the concepts. I mean, I should have given extra practice to deepen understanding (LK, post-conversation notes, November 2020). I ended the conversation by asking RF how she felt after our conversation. She announced that there was a big difference from previous evaluation experiences. The communication and conversation made all the difference to her. She stated that “this shows that you want to support me; you do not just want to evaluate me.” She continued to emphasize that the evaluation form is just a form, a piece of paper that lacks communication.

Teacher 2 Response to Post-Observation Conversation. I began the post- observation conversation by sharing with RJ the challenge to find time for conversation as a leader. I then communicated the post-observation purpose, which was to give RJ an opportunity to reflect on her own teaching and enhance her instructional capacity. I asked RJ to think of an asset or strength about her forms of questioning. To reiterate, we addressed two types of questioning in post-observation conversations (1) assessment questions which measure knowledge and (2) advancement questions which employ critical thinking. RJ responded that she heavily relies on deduction and that she does not easily provide students with the answers. She explained that when she poses a question, the student has to think of an answer; if the student struggles to do so, another student could help until they collaboratively reach a correct answer.

I confirmed that this was indeed a strength and that I had observed that she used different kinds of questions: yes/no questions, question words like *how* and *why*, and fill-in-the-blank questions. I was hoping RJ would recognize her focus on assessment versus advancement questions without me directly pointing this out. ELL students need to have opportunities to critically think and articulate this thinking in the English language, and improving question shared with RJ that assessment questions measure knowledge whereas advancement questions employ critical thinking. I briefly discussed think time and the call-on strategy with RJ, and she explained that this was spontaneous and that she had not given it much thought before. I suggested that this may be an area she could intentionally use to enhance language learning, and she agreed. Then, it occurred to RJ that she did direct questions to students according to their language level.

I asked RJ to decide what she wanted to improve about her teaching; she stated that most of the questions she asked were straightforward (assessment) and that should promote higher thinking skills through (advancement) questions. Reflecting on the lesson, RJ said that the questions helped her "see her teaching." She stated that she scaffolded instruction to ensure equity: "When we're talking about equity, we're talking about facilitating every single task so that our students will have equal chances of getting engaged in an English class as English learners. We have to scaffold so that they feel that they can produce something in English in class to gain confidence in using the language" (LK, post-conversation notes, November 2020). RJ continued to elaborate on ways to create equitable access to the English language by saying:

> For me, I totally promote equity through praise, through equal engagement for all students. I don't neglect any student. I don't have any student who is, you know, not going to participate. I try to make every student feel at the end of the class that, yes, I participated. I am part of the English language learning and I was there. I give chances for every student to speak up. And for me, every student has a voice, and he or she has the right to speak up regardless of their mastery of the content.

This was the first time I heard a team member use the word *equity* to describe her teaching. In this past section, I have analytically narrated the PAR Cycle One evidence related to the beliefs, standard practices, and apprehensions related to the existing IA evaluation system. I also discussed the role of the leader as evaluator and how I lead post-observation conversations. In the next section I will discuss implications for future practice in PAR Cycle Two.

Implications of Emergent Categories

In the third section of this chapter, I examine the implications of the participatory action research project by revisiting the research questions and focus of practice and leadership development. One essential query guided the PAR work: how to engage three English teachers and two administrators at the at the International Academy in a meaningful evaluation process for improving teacher practices that fully include all levels of language development. The PAR evidence helped me identify the strengths and needs in the context at the micro (school level), meso (organizational level), and macro (structural level) contexts. The participatory action research (PAR) study aimed to support teachers to teach English equitably through a meaningful and actionable process. I revisited the research questions to frame the evidence into possible implications for emergent categories. The three PAR sub-questions addressed in PAR Cycles One were:

1. To what extent do teachers improve their instructional practices for English Language learning?
2. To what extent do the English Language Heads of Departments (HODs) and instructional leaders develop the capacity (knowledge, skills, beliefs, motivation) to implement effective teacher evaluation practices?
3. How is my leadership improved through this PAR process?

I revisited the research questions, the sources of data from PAR Cycle One and continued to highlight the key role the instructional leader plays to cogenerate an equitable and meaningful evaluation process for improving practice that fully includes all levels of language development. Furthermore, key evidence supported the notion that post-observation conversations and meaningful dialogue changed how teachers perceived feedback and the purpose of evaluation. CPR members demonstrated a shift in beliefs and attitudes towards post-observation conversations with the instructional leader; they described the informal conversations as useful and meaningful. In this section, I briefly discuss the need to build educators' capacity as a prerequisite for cogenerating a meaningful and equitable evaluation process.

Post-Observation Conversations Improving Leadership

The key learning for leadership emerged from informal conversations with the English department head. After the Department Head and I conducted post-observations conversations, we both realized the importance of developing leader and teacher capacity. Reflecting on PAR Cycle One, I asked the secondary English Department Head if she thought the post-observation conference was helpful and if the CPR work had shifted her leadership in any way. She responded that it absolutely had as she gained knowledge and found a "clear path on how to observe and evaluate teachers" using the questioning protocol. She firmly believed that she had become "a better supervisor and a better observer." It dawned on me after this post-observation conversation that our goal was not primarily to reinvent the evaluation tool, but rather learn how to engage teacher voices. We both came to the conclusion that irrespective of the evaluation tool, valuing teacher voice and input after an observation had greater meaning and value for both the teacher and leader. In reflection on my personal development, using the post-observation questioning protocol gave me clarity on how to encourage teachers to investigate their own practices and reflect in a collaborative and uncompetitive environment. I consistently emphasize that their voices are valuable if we are to see true change in daily practice (Kayed, Memo 4, April 23, 2020).

Practitioner research is intended to improve practice and bring about meaningful change rather than advance theory (Gitlin et al., 1993). I do not view my role as a principal and as a research practitioner as separate or dual roles. I believe a true educator is forever learning; thus, my role as a practitioner and researcher is one. I would describe my experience as a principal and research practitioner as a journey of ongoing learning and discovery while building a community of practice and inquiry (Kayed, Memo 6, December 2019).

My work as a research practitioner in PAR Cycle One was in its preliminary stages of development and is not yet systematic, comprehensive, or profound enough to systematically change practice; however, CPR members did indeed believe that their capacity and knowledge has improved as a result of this PAR (RJ, post-observation conference, December 22, 2019). PAR Cycle One was more focused on building relationships and provoking thoughts and dialogue. The CPR group is just beginning to understand the value of the work of the PAR. Over eight weeks, we have examined and communicated our trepidations regarding the current evaluation system at IEC. In addition, CPR team members have suggested that we need time built into meetings for reflection and that a protocol for reflection must be established as well. Systematic reflection and inquiry can hypothetically bring about changes in practices when those practices become part of the CPR's daily work.

I am pursuing a protocol for reflection because I believe that the ability to authentically change teacher practices in the classroom is at the core of educational leadership. I am seeking to collaboratively create a well-designed teacher-evaluation process that will have a direct and lasting effect on English language teachers. I hope to become a better leader by knowing how to engage teachers in self-directed, authentic, and consistent change in their teaching practices. We implemented the evaluation tool the PAR to help instructional leaders evolve or become different kinds of observers, observers who use evidence to initiate conversations with teachers that can, in turn, initiate a change in practice.

In the PAR, I continued to explore how and if teacher evaluation will improve English language teaching and teachers' views of English language learners. While we practice and model more equitable leadership by including teachers in the design process, we hope to encourage the use of equitable practices for students.

Building Teacher and Leader Capacity

Bridging the knowledge gap and enhancing the asset lens concerning English Language Learning is a prerequisite for a meaningful evaluation process. I have come to understand from the PAR work in Cycle One that the existing evaluation process created gaps in teacher knowledge and performance; moreover, the evaluation also created a deficit lens in regard to English language learners as they were a direct threat to teacher evaluation at IA. Bridging gaps in teacher knowledge concerning English language learning in an international setting is a prerequisite for a meaningful evaluation process. We designed the PAR to co-construct an evaluation process will bridge knowledge gaps for English teachers in an international setting. Because Jordanian teachers have not had the privilege of going through a teacher certification program like their counterparts in the US, they require support to reach the desired language instructional skills to which this co-constructed evaluation can contribute.

This paragraph outlines the possible topics for improvement in PAR Cycle Two; two concepts of language instruction and learning are: intentionally using language demands to enhance students' English language and translanguaging. I will attempt to link both concepts to a meaningful teacher evaluation process in PAR Cycle Two. Two CPR members expressed that they had not heard of the terms "language equity," "translanguaging," "assessing questions," or "advancing questions" before joining the CPR; therefore, I considered these aforementioned topics gaps in teacher knowledge that I must address in the PAR project.

Moreover, after looking into some of the CPR conversations on incorporating conversation and specific feedback in the teacher evaluation, I decided incorporate conversations that may enhance the teachers' asset lens or mindset in relation to English Language Learners. This statement continues to haunt me as a leader: "There should be a separate, intensive program for low achievers (in English) and a separate teacher for that." (L. Kayed, meeting notes, March 4, 2020). I believe that such thinking is the result of desperation caused by a judgmental evaluation and a lack of knowledge for both teachers and evaluators.

Understanding inequities in the school community is key to bridging the knowledge gap and co-constructing a meaningful evaluation process. Student and teacher voices are rarely acknowledged in our international school communities in Jordan. In my opinion, inequities happen in school communities as a result of ignorance; for example, I was not genuinely conscious of student or teacher voice before joining this doctorate program. Through the PAR we need to cultivate teacher and student voices in our international school and model this practice for other international schools in the area.

The school community at the International Academy is not ethnically diverse; conversely, the majority of students at the international schools of IA are linguistically varied in fluency in the English language and are predominantly emergent bilinguals or English language learners. IA students have a rich opportunity to converse, think, and learn in English throughout the school day. Knowing that most of IA students are English language learners, we need to assure that English teachers are engaging all voices in the classroom, especially new and less fluent student voices. The CPR needs to decide on and align a working definition of equity related to the PAR. How the PAR understands equity can have a direct impact on how we see, interpret, and correct inequities in our school environment. We also seek ways to provide opportunities for regular collaboration and interaction during class in English that will help address performance gaps in the classroom while improving student understanding in general.

I find that the essential work of the PAR is to cultivate the conviction that student voice is fundamental to the work of the CPR. The PAR evidence highlighted areas in need of attention in

PAR Cycle Two activities: (1) bridge the gap in knowledge concerning English language learning in an international setting as this is the prerequisite to a meaningful evaluation; (2) shift the deficit mindset in relation to ELL students; and (3) redirect the leadership lens in evaluation from a *pro forma* checklist view to a focus on key language demands and teaching points in the English classroom.

Conclusion

Teaching educators to reflect deeply and think about their practice is one of the ambitions of this PAR. “Reflective thought is consecutive, not merely a sequence” (Dewey, 1909); consequential reflection that changes practice requires conviction in the purpose of reflection and necessitates grit to faithfully modify practice. In PAR Cycle Two we want to identify what moves a teacher to “see the need” to improve practice and engage in effective reflections about their work. PAR Cycle Two will provide us with the opportunity to explore what increases a teacher’s awareness of their current strengths and weaknesses and how leaders can help teachers act intentionally to change practice. Thus, in PAR Cycle Two we focused on building teacher knowledge related to language teaching and learning and attempted to shift the lens from a deficit to an asset point of view of English Language learners. The PAR was an ongoing journey of change, optimistic change that will hopefully outlast us. By the conclusion of the cycle, I was excited about what future dialogue will help me discover how about to have more effective reflective conferences and their relationship to classroom practice.

CHAPTER 6: PAR CYCLE TWO

In PAR Cycle One, as a part of our work to re-design the teacher evaluation process to be more useful to the teachers and the leaders who supervise them, we analyzed the school's current evaluation tool to gain a better understanding of our present practices. CPR members suggested revisions to include a greater focus on responsive language teaching and learning. Thus, we kept in mind our purpose: to revise the current evaluation tool by cogenerating a more meaningful process and more emphasis on equitable language teaching and learning.

In detailing the PAR activities, I reassess and expand on categories of PAR Cycle One and PAR Cycle Two to draw out themes. Secondly, I examine two components of the organizational setting of the project: cultural and political institutions. Finally, I present the findings. While a change in administrator at IA interrupted our ability to fully develop the evaluation model, we learned the value of collaboration and the importance of meaningful teacher observations and conversations about improving practice in the teacher evaluation process.

PAR Cycle Two Process: Key Activities

The Jordanian school calendar, mandated by the Ministry of Education, included a winter break for students from mid-January to early February 2020. During the fourth week of PAR Cycle Two, Jordan went into lockdown due to the COVID pandemic, and the PAR work was put on hold until the CPR members could regroup and reprogram the PAR Cycle Two activities. We shifted to in-person and virtual meetings, zoom community learning exchanges, and Flipgrid video discussions. I observed classes via Zoom and had phone interviews with English Language teachers and instructional leaders; the group had Zoom meetings with an ECU professor. We designed all activities to enhance knowledge and capacity related to the PAR research and to focus on transforming practice for second language learning (see Table 13).

Three other complications impacted our work in addition to from the pandemic. Because RF delivered a baby and took an extended maternity leave, I was no longer able to hold conversations, observations, or interviews with her. RJ only taught 10th grade, and her students concluded their coursework by the first week of February and started mock examinations in preparation for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) external exams (later cancelled due to COVID-19). SD did not have the resources to teach virtually; the school was not able to supply teachers with computers or internet during this time. I asked the assistant teacher to step in and substitute until the lockdown was lifted. As we had to abruptly expand our educational practice, we learned how to connect and engage in teaching, learning, and reflectional conversations in a virtual setting.

While the general school administration ended the school year earlier than expected, that decision provided an unexpected opportunity to focus on shared learning and the growth of one teacher: Mr. MS and I conducted virtual online observations, which were recorded for later analysis. While observations did not occur, all CPR members except for RF participated in the virtual meetings, virtual community learning exchanges, and phone interviews.

Meetings

In three meetings of the CPR group, we scheduled the PAR activities, discussed personal beliefs about language learning, and considered possible changes to the IA evaluation. In addition, I had biweekly meetings with ECU professors, and the CPR team met twice with one ECU professor.

In our meetings, we discussed beliefs regarding English Language teaching and learning

Table 13

Timeline for PAR Cycle Two Activities (February – April 2020)

Activities	WEEK 1 (9-13 FEB)	WEEK 2 (16-20 FEB)	WEEK 3 (23-29 FEB)	WEEK 4 (1-5 MAR)	WEEK 5 (8-12 MAR)	WEEK 6 (15-19 MAR)	WEEK 7 (22-26 MAR)	WEEK 8 (29-2 MAR)	WEEK 9 (5-9 APR)	WEEK 10 (12-16 APR)	WEEK 11 (19-23 APR)	WEEK 12 (26-30 APR)	WEEK 13 (26- MAY)
Meetings with CPR	•			•									•
Interviews with English Teachers						•					•		
Flipgrid Video Discussions											•		•
Community Learning Exchanges							•						
Classroom Observations (Zoom)									•		•		
Post Classroom Observation Conversations										•		•	
Memo-ing				•		•			•		•		
Zoom meetings w/ ECU Professors			•	•			•		•	•			•

and suggestions about amending the IA teacher evaluation form and process. CPR members discussed the impact of student engagement, behavior management, and external testing on English Language Learning within the school. CPR members communicated their stance on reading instruction, vocabulary building and language fluency and compared the importance of learning language usage v/s grammar for English Language Learners. Teachers and leaders collaboratively explored the characteristics of a conducive environment for language learning (L. Kayed, Meeting 2 notes, February 20, 2020).

A prime focus in Meeting 3 was exploring how teachers and leaders learn. We read an excerpt from *How people learn: Brain, mind, and experience* and discussed the characteristics of expert knowledge. I compared conditioning knowledge to conditioning hair:

> Expert knowledge is conditionalized, and the conditional relationships on patterns that experts are recognizing. I mean, if you are conditionalized—means, like you put conditioner on your hair, right? To improve it. That's the same thing with knowledge. You have to take care of it. You have to nourish it. You have to read more. You have to write more. You have to teach it to others so you can become fluent in that knowledge (L. Kayed, Meeting 3 notes, March 4, 2020).

CPR members connected the importance of recognizing expert knowledge to evaluation. NK said: “The purpose of evaluation was for us to learn and to change practice; so, to improve” (L. Kayed, Meeting 3 notes, March 4, 2020). CPR members indicated that the conversations were useful for their learning in meetings, and they communicated challenges as well as moments of victory as they embraced different ways of teaching due to COVID-19 (L. Kayed, final meeting notes, July 18, 2020).

Virtual Activities

Four other activities occurred virtually: community learning exchanges, observations, interviews, and Flipgrid discussions (see Table 13). In addition, I wrote regular reflective memos (Saldaña, 2016), which I used to triangulate the evidence from other sources. I conducted interviews with English language teachers (n=2) in PAR Cycle Two to understand their beliefs and understanding of the current evaluation system at IA. I focused interviews with instructional leaders (n=2) on changes in leadership practices stemming from this PAR. I designed both interview protocols to assess collective CPR knowledge growth as a result of PAR work.

The CPR engaged in four community learning exchanges (CLEs) during Cycle Two. The purposes of CLEs were to build collective knowledge; enrich the CPR's knowledge, skills, beliefs and motivation; and reflect on our work. Guajardo et al. (2016) state: "The art and theory of CLE pedagogies is grounded in the idea that people's stories and actions are bridged through mediating factors we call pedagogies. CLE participants learn these skills, strategies, and processes through relationships and conversations" (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 79). Lynda Tredway, a professor from East Carolina University, facilitated two CLEs for the CPR team members (March 25, 2020) and for the CPR instructional leaders (April 22, 2020). We addressed the importance of teacher voice in the observations during the first CLE and principal post-observation conversational practices in the second (Tredway & Argent, 2020). In addition, Zarmina Hotaki, a colleague in the doctoral program, facilitated a CLE to introduce translanguaging theory and practice to support language learning in an ELL setting (April 15, 2020).

In addition, during PAR Cycle Two, I conducted three observations and post-observation conversations; therefore, the PAR work shifted the focus from a hierarchical observation toward a more collaborative approach (Glickman, 2002). I used the Effective Conversation Guide (Tredway & Argent, 2020) to steer post-observation conversations. Learning how to become more collaborative and develop cognitive coaching skills was a focus of my work (L. Kayed, final reflective memo, July 20, 2020). As a result, CPR members and I collaboratively arrived at a practice for them to improve. Finally, I used Zoom to conduct interviews and Flipgrid, an asynchronous platform for discussions, to continue the PAR work. CPR members had an opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the diversity and inclusion continuum by sharing their thoughts, struggles, and their curiosity to explore possible changes in teaching or leadership practices.

Reflective Memoing

In regular memo-ing, I used my understandings of the evidence to find consistent or recurring themes. Memoing gave me an opportunity to analyze conversations, interviews, and observations to better understand factors influencing practice and to determine what steps the CPR team could take to support changes in teacher practice and evaluation and leader practices. For me, memo-ing made the CPR thinking visible. I revisited each memo when new understandings surfaced after conversations and dialogue.

Evidence Analysis: Themes

The data from PAR Cycle One conveys the CPR beliefs concerning the existing IA evaluation system. From the evidence analysis, I determined two emergent themes related to co-constructing a meaningful evaluation process for teachers of English: first, evidence-based observation and conversation processes improved leadership and teacher practices. Leaders in the CPR group were excited about improving evidence-based observation and conversation processes as they felt it supported their leadership growth, and teachers found informal feedback through the post-observation protocol to be helpful. Secondly, the CPR team created a learning space and co-constructed a knowledge base for improved teaching practices of English to speakers of Arabic. CPR members explored how we could transform schooling for second language teachers and learners and identified key factors that influence equitable English teaching and learning, instructional leader practices, and the school environment.

Evidence-Based Observations

Data from teacher observations and the conversations that followed were important because they showed me what teacher practices were most prevalent. I adopted a linguist lens to closely observe for components of language teaching. Observing the forms of discourse and questioning is key to analyzing student access to the language at any skill level: "Focusing on student access to the classroom discourse so ALL students have a regular opportunity to talk in class is a foundational part of building an equitable classroom culture" (L. Tredway, personal communication, April 22, 2020). In Figure 9, I report observational data from PAR Cycle One and PAR Cycle Two. Four practices required attention: calling on, English language learning practices, think time, and question form. First, all teachers preferred students to raise their hands before they answered which is a debatable practice in terms of equitable access to classroom discussions. However, teachers did share a classroom culture in which being wrong or asking for help were common (L. Kayed, Memo 4, April 23, 2020). Secondly, teachers collectively did not use realia -teaching aids- or organizational charts, nor were their classrooms a print-rich environment, which are all vital elements for an ELL classroom. Third, think time or wait time was not systematic. Teachers shared that they should plan for think time but failed to do so because they were concerned about instructional time and pacing (L. Kayed, Memo 4, April 23, 2020). The fourth practice in need of attention was the use of assessment questions verses

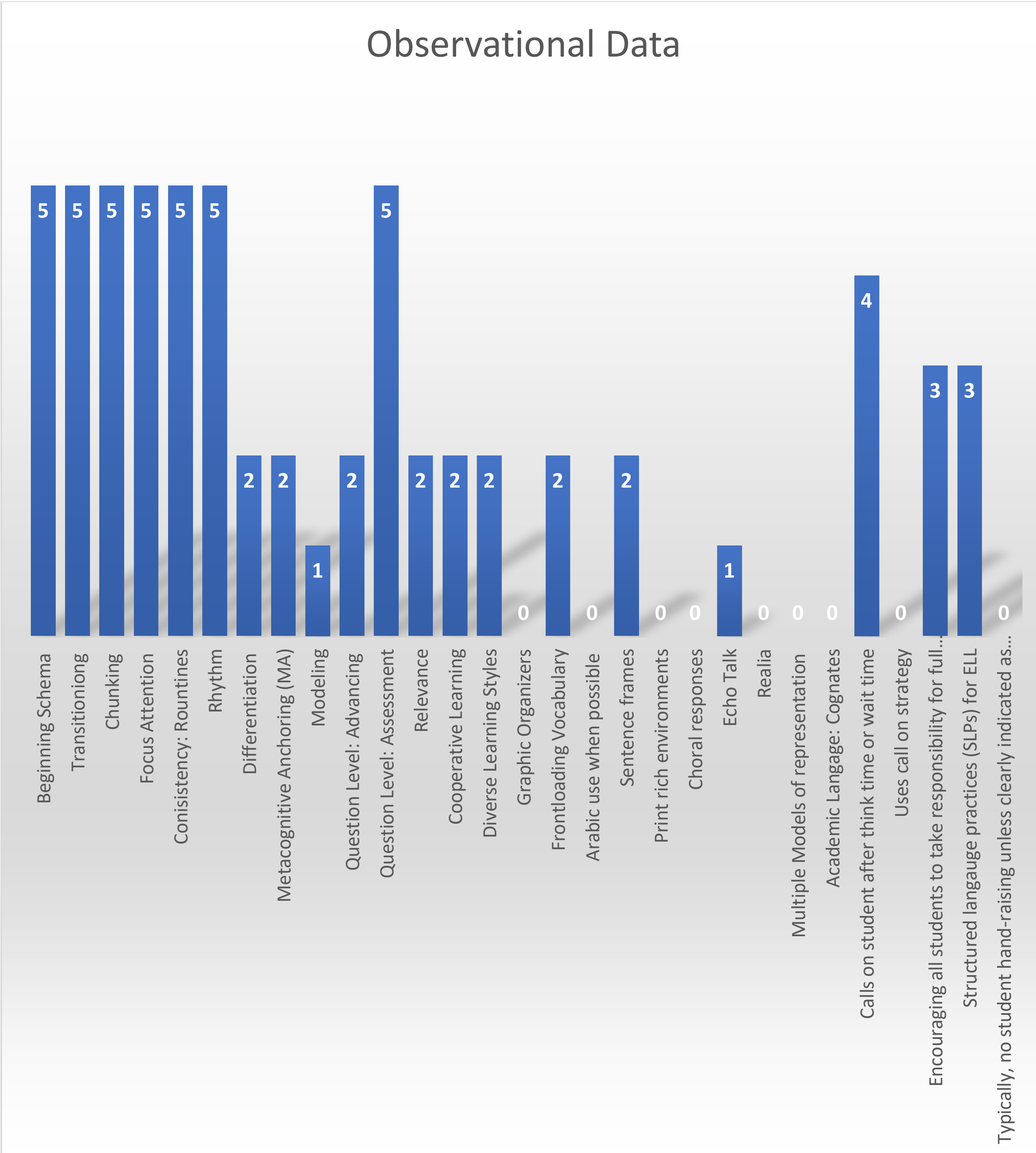


Figure 9. Observational data from PAR Cycle One and PAR Cycle Two.

advancing questions. Finally, teachers did not use translanguaging, meaning using the mother tongue of Arabic as a scaffold to understanding. All teachers warned students not to use Arabic and redirected them to use English only.

Post-Observation Conversations: Transformational Coaching

To conduct post-observation conversations after I observed practices, I adopted key practices for conducting a more effective conversation (Tredway & Argent, 2020): an introduction with an emphasis on evidence; using data to have the conversation; and asking probing questions so that the teacher could decide about a practice that he or she wanted to improve. Before meeting for the post-observation conversation, I shared the observation script with the teacher. I emphasized calling-on practices and language learning in post-observation conversations. Sharing the observational evidence with teachers in post-observation conversations changed how teachers perceived evaluation and feedback.

Equitable Calling-On

The first two lessons I observed were a vocabulary lesson and a reading comprehension lesson for eighth grade English Language Arts. At the beginning of the post-observation conversation, we exchanged greetings and some casual conversation; then I communicated the conversation purpose:

> The purpose of these conversations is to grow instructional capacity. I am interested in your thinking about your questioning forms in the classroom. And I would like you to tell me what we can do as instructional leaders. Ms. RJ and myself are here to help support you in whatever way needed. And, MS, you need to decide where you want to make that improvement. It needs to be self-initiated (MS, post-observation conversations notes, March 20, 2020).

I then proceeded with the first question: “What did you notice as a strength or asset about your questioning forms in the classroom?” The question helped me understand the teacher’s thinking. We reflected on actions that facilitated equitable access to the academic content in English. I communicated with MS that he did indeed give students thinking time in the beginning—10 out of 31 students participated within the time I observed. Nine students produced correct sentences. Praise occurred multiple times. The teacher consistently paraphrased, and students had time to write sentences using the vocabulary words in a chart. This transcript and his response revealed his thinking about equitable calling-on:

> LK: “So how did you call on the students? You had them raise their hand (virtually). I thought that was very interesting.”
>
> MS: So when I see myself in my screen, see my video, plus the names of some students, usually only a certain number of hands are showing up on the screen. I go down with the arrow, like scroll down to see the rest of the students who are raising their hands. And I try to see if I picked on one of the students to answer and make sure the next person to answer is not the same student who I asked earlier, just to give like equitable opportunities for students to all, like participate because I don't have one hero in the class. I would love to have multiple heroes.

MS presented a clear stance on equitable student access to participate in this conversation, despite the fact that he relied on memory to call on students. This is an example of a gap between beliefs and practice, and it is our role as leaders to connect the two. MS equated waiting for students to raise their hands to equitable practice and translated this into being fair. He highlighted the fact that he encourages students to take risks and make mistakes. When RJ confirmed that he did indeed encourage other students to raise their hands and answer, MS continued to explain his calling-on strategy as concern for the students:

> OK. One of the things about me as a teacher. I have never called on a student to answer something. And that would cause an embarrassment. OK. Because if I do that, that student will never raise his hand again in the classroom. So, if I ever call somebody randomly, I know from my knowledge of my students, I know that that student knows the answer, but he might be shy to raise his hand. So, if I have even 5% doubt that the student might not know the answer, I will not pick that student, and I will go with the ones who raise their hands because, I mean, they're the ones who are volunteering to answer the question (MS, post-observation conversation notes, March 20, 2020).

While he is concerned for the students, the calling-on choices do not prompt equitable academic discourse as some students never volunteer (Zwiers & Crawford, 2011). However, in keeping with the process, instead of telling him this was wrong, I then moved on to prompt MS for a decision on improving practice. I was able to shift the conversation by employing questioning to regain the collaborative tone in the conversation. I said: “I wanted to ask you, where do you want to make an improvement?” MS responded:

> I would love to learn or to be introduced to maybe different strategies, techniques, or methods in teaching certain aspects of the language in grammar and literature. You know, I have my own ways. I have been practicing them for so long. But maybe somebody who is sitting in my classroom, somebody with experience like you or RJ. You're noticing things I am blind to as you're observing me. You might say, OK, you've used this approach. What about if you use this one? (MS, post-observation conversations notes, March 20, 2020).

We ended the meeting with the agreement that I would attend a reading comprehension lesson, which I discuss next. The purpose of the next observation was to closely observe for evidence to develop strategies for various English language topics (L. Kayed, post-observation conversation notes, March 20, 2020).

Language Learning Strategies

During another observation, I focused on a reading comprehension. MS informed me that only six out of 18 students were fluent in English in this class. He described students' language proficiency:

> Those I can depend on in the classroom is like six. Those ones will not disappoint me when I ask a question. There's always one of them at least who will be raising his hand to answer. And that makes me feel that my information is being disseminated to them… like whatever I'm teaching them is getting across (L. Kayed, MS post-observation conversation notes 2, April 15, 2020).

MS's disappointment was obvious, and he believed students' engagement was a measure for his success as a teacher. I asked MS: What kind of challenges are you facing with the 12 students who have not yet acquired the language? He stated that student disengagement and lack of parent involvement are his main challenges and that he tried his best to simplify questions and phrase them in different ways to reach all students. He elaborated that he anchors his teaching in student experiences saying:

> But I try to simplify as much as I can. I even could draw on examples from—forget about the international culture, from their own culture, like an example from the Jordanian culture, something that they have experienced, or they have heard about or something had

> to happen around them (L. Kayed, MS post-observation conversation notes, April 15, 2020).

What he is describing is indeed culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. However, receptive language skills develop before productive language skills, and students' lack of participation does not necessarily translate into lack of understanding (L. Kayed, MS post-observation conversation notes 2, April 15, 2020). We discussed instances in which using realia, audiovisual, or kinesthetic scaffolds would help students understand and engage. Students were reading about a tea ceremony; no pictures or realia were employed, and the teacher acknowledged he lacked the ability to use body language or modeling as a way to clarify concepts and agreed that using videos and pictures would enhance student understanding.

The post-observation conversation with MS demonstrated the teacher's vulnerability and openness. This conversation was especially insightful as I gained an understanding of IA teachers' position toward translanguaging, i.e., using Arabic to support the learning of English in the classroom. The IA school community viewed translanguaging from a deficit point of view. I asked MS why the use of Arabic was inflexible. MS stated:

> They blame the teacher's ineffectiveness or inefficiency in teaching the language. They say, look, the teacher himself might use Arabic because he lacks the skill to talk 100% of all 45 minutes in English. So they might kind of question the teacher's skills in English, that's number one. Number two, they might question the teacher's disciplinary system in the classroom and assume that he cannot control the class. So he allows the students to speak in Arabic just because he wants to have a smooth class (MS, post-observation conversation notes, April 23, 2020).

I appreciated this insight as it demonstrated that we needed to address the issue from an asset-based approach, that is, translanguaging as a means for equitable access for all students to the English language (MS post-observation conversation notes, April 15, 2020).

The second highlight from this conversation is that MS, a teacher with over 15 years of experience, willingly shared that he struggled with vocabulary instruction and assessment. I saw this as a milestone; the dialogue paradigm had clearly shifted from guarded to open, authentic, and vulnerable. In all post-observation conversations, teachers willingly made decisions about practices they wished to focus on and improve based on the evidence.

In summary, I found that post-observation conversations were an opportunity to enhance knowledge and master what we knew about language teaching and learning. Teachers were able to have a conversation about the reasoning for their practices, and I was then able to use those responses to have a conversation about practice. Teachers made decisions about what to do next after they were offered a choice, which is a key component of adult learning (Drago-Severson, 2012; Knowles, 1980). The conversations fueled me as leader because I had a defined path for change; the conversations helped me polish coaching skills. To frame the transformational principles for post-observation conversations, my disposition was compassionate, purposeful, curious, nonjudgmental, connected, and fueled with a healthy urgency to correct inequities in the system (Aguilar, 2020).

Co-Constructing a Learning Space for Better Teacher Practices

The CPR team co-created a learning space and a knowledge base for improved teaching practices of English to speakers of Arabic. Through meetings, community learning exchanges, and interviews, we engaged in intentional activities that tapped into CPR experiences and beliefs about what influences English teacher practice and student learning at IA. As a result of the interviews and two flip-grid video interactive discussions, I learned that what teachers believed influenced their practices which enhanced basic student language acquisition (see Figure 10 for evidence analysis from these data sources). I coded CPR member responses and converted the tallies to a graph that highlighted three key factors that influenced teacher practice: (1) leader actions (21%), (2) leader dialogue with teachers (11%), (3) educator positive and negative prior experiences (19%). Interestingly, only one teacher mentioned that teacher agency (2%) is a main influence on teacher practice.

According to this interview, leadership practices and teacher-leader dialogue ranked as the most important factors in influencing teacher practice. This is echoed in various data from other PAR sources. In Meeting 3 of PAR Two, CPR members identified key influences on teach practice as the leader's stance on evaluation, beliefs about learning the English language, and expert knowledge. CPR members shared that leader who have expert knowledge can reform teacher practices. Expert knowledge was defined as knowledge that has purpose, is adaptive, and supports others. They asserted that when the leader uses evidence-based observations to improve practice, as a tool for growth rather than a conclusive evaluation, this positively impacts teacher practice. CPR members described the leader's empathy, support for teachers to pursue "teacher learning," and ongoing dialogue with teacher as influential leadership practices. For example, RF stated in an interview that when a leader acknowledges teacher efforts, it positively influences teacher's motivation to change practice. A CPR member elaborated that when the leader establishes relational trust and builds knowledge, they are influential reformers in the school (L. Kayed, final memo, July 20, 2020).

Prior experiences—positive or negative—influenced their practices. Two teachers said that becoming a parent changed their teaching practices for the better: they stated that parenthood

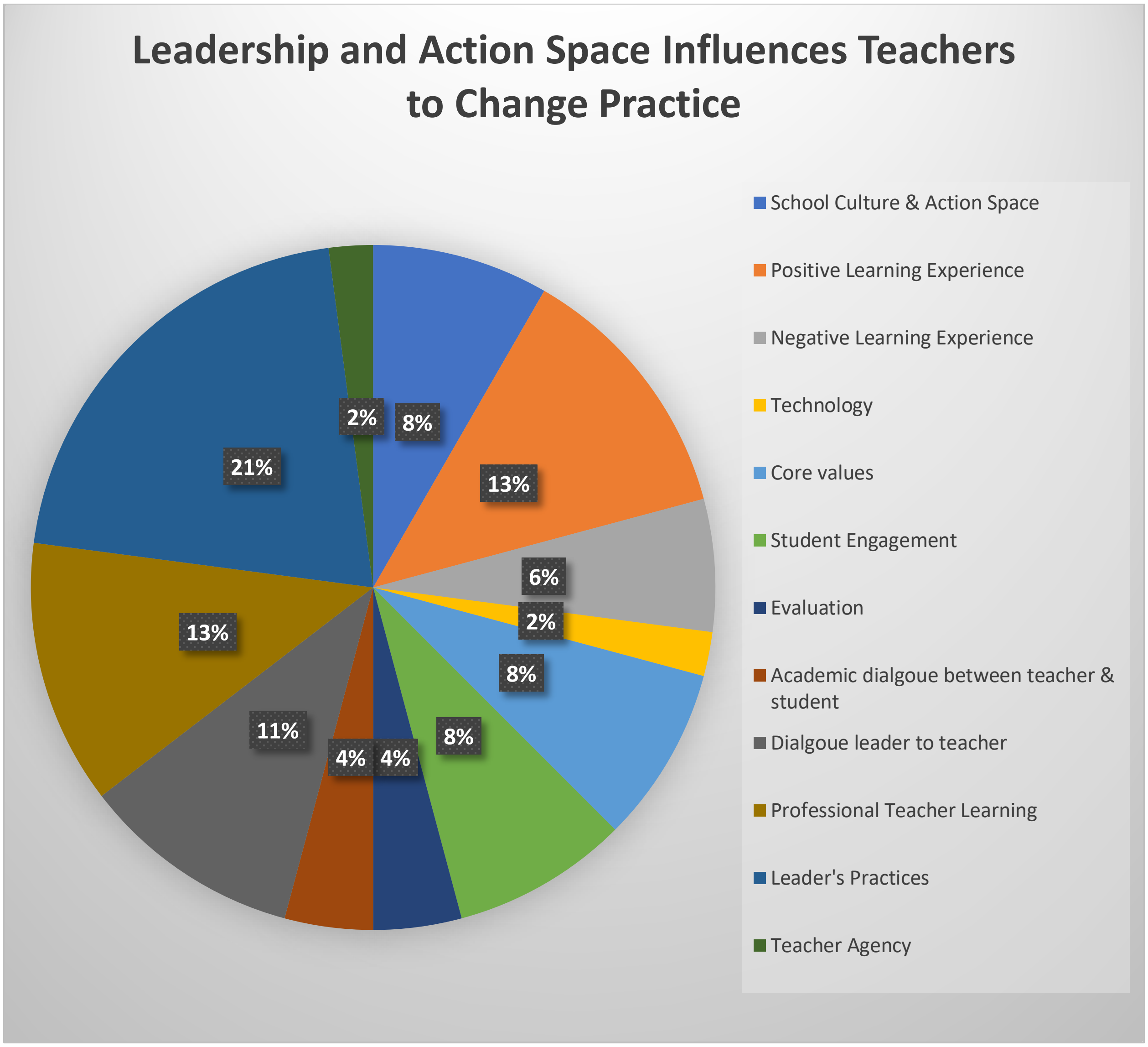


Figure 10. Interview: What influences teachers to change practice?

made them more patient and made them realize that they wanted for students what they wanted for their own children. CPR members expressed that even negative experiences have influenced their practices, such as a poor evaluation or a boring lesson where students were not interested. The same leader also said: **"**Comfort is the enemy of change; if teachers are comfortable with what they do, they will never change their practice until they experience a shock that will demand a positive change." Leaders' support and encouragement for continued teacher learning opportunities and teacher-leader conversations were repeatedly mentioned as positively impacting teacher practice in both PAR Cycles.

Teacher agency is a prerequisite for changing practice. Only one CPR member described a sense of responsibility as a driver for her actions. CPR members expressed that their conversations with students impacted their teaching and motivation for improvement. One CPR member compared her sense of agency to a thermostat; teachers used student engagement to gauge their performance and their sense of accomplishment. SD shared that she is motivated by a "feeling that those students have no one else, and they need me as their teacher to deliver my best.... We, as teachers, should change our practices to cope with the new life of the students". (L. Kayed, meeting notes, March 4, 2020). She felt that the student experience should be in the forefront, not school's rules and policies. The teacher's stance towards the new generation echoes Dewey's (1909) thoughts on our responsibility to the young:

> It is his business to be on the alert to see what attitudes and habitual tendencies are being created. In this direction, he must, if he is an educator, be able to judge what attitudes are actually conducive to continued growth and what are detrimental. (p. 39)

The teacher’s concern for student growth, much like our concern as leaders for the teacher’s growth, was at the forefront of her thinking and ours, not the rules and policies that thwarted our efforts to provide stronger evaluation of teachers.

Views on Factors Influencing Language Learning in the Classroom

In describing how students best learned a new language based on their personal experience (see Figure 11), CPR members reported five factors: a safe classroom environment (28%); teacher knowledge and expertise (27%); student self-confidence (18%); student motivation (18%); and culture (9%). CPR team members discussed the importance of a safe and supportive context for language learning and acknowledged that teacher expertise and knowledge are the two most important factors that influence student learning. SD shared that the environment must be not only physically safe, but also that “the student must feel that his voice is heard, appreciated, and recognized, and this is not happening” (L. Kayed, Memo, March 4, 2020).

Teachers have a lifelong impact on their students. During post-observation conversations, MS often shared how he tried to build student self-confidence and motivation. During this PAR project, I did not focus on observing how teachers fostered student self-esteem and how this is associated with increased motivation and learning. However, CPR members mentioned in more than one PAR meeting that students’ motivation and positive interaction fuels teacher motivation to want to do better. Observing and understanding how teachers build students’ self-confidence may be a focus for future PAR projects.

Co-Constructing a Meaningful Evaluation

The purpose for both cycles of inquiry was to set iterative goals that engaged teachers in rethinking evaluation that would better support their professional growth (Kraft & Gilmore,

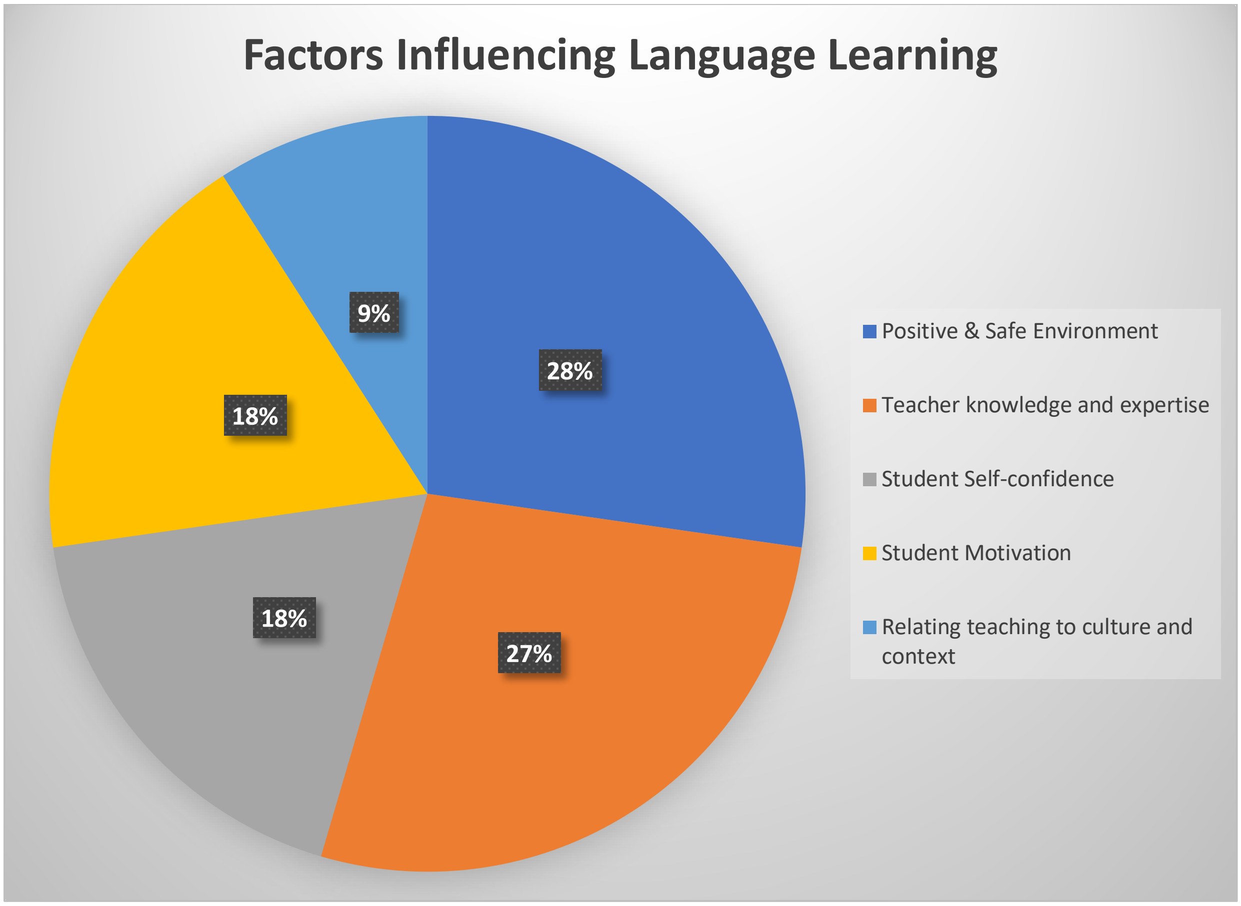


Figure 11. Interview: Factors influencing language learning

2016). Post-observation conversations changed how teachers perceived evaluation and feedback; they found informal evaluations and ongoing conversations because of the compelling evidence to be more valuable, as the informality and the conversation dynamics created a safe space to talk about areas for improvement without fear of judgement. CPR members co-developed their knowledge and capacity through participation in the PAR, and instructional leaders improved their leadership skills and knowledge of evidence-based observation and conversation practices. In discussing how we analyzed the data to improve evidence-based observation and conversation processes for teachers and leaders, I suggest a more meaningful evaluation process for teachers of English to Arabic-speakers. CPR members mentioned in more than one PAR meeting that students' motivation fuels teacher motivation.

Improved Evidence-Based Observation and Conversation Processes

During PAR Cycle One and Two, I shifted the leadership evaluation lens to an emphasis on meaningful post-observation conversations with teachers based on observational evidence. With that shift, we better understood what influenced English language teachers' practice and concentrated on building knowledge to transform practice. Using the effective conversation guide (Tredway & Argent, 2020), I engaged teachers in more meaningful conversations about their experiences. As a result, in most conversations I uncovered deep-rooted beliefs that explained current practices. For example, during a post-observation conversation, RJ shared the following:

> It's [the evaluation process] going to shift definitely. It's not going to stay the same after this…you give very specific details. I like the beginning when you said you will transcribe each and every detail happening inside the classroom. So, when you sit with the teacher, you have evidence, not criticism. And the evidence, you know, it will make

> us perform better in the future. So, I believe that the whole observation process at IA has to be different next year, not only for the English department (RJ, post-observation notes, April 19, 2020).

Using evidence from observations and conversations by instructional leaders with teachers will support ongoing development and transfer of pedagogical knowledge. To observing for pedagogical issues to be addressed and conduct meaningful post-observation conversations requires us to plan and shift the observational lenses.

Shifting the Leadership Observational Lenses

The observational leadership lens shifted in two ways: (a) frequency and process; and (b) perspective. As a leader, I shifted from sporadically observing teachers for evaluation only to regularly analyzing teaching and learning. I used to have infrequent, announced classroom visits; now, I had more frequent visits, both unannounced and announced. The process changed from recording all evidence and taking extensive notes on one or two lessons a year to watching for key "teaching points" and evidence in each visit.

My perspective also changed. As a result of more frequent observations and the revised process, I altered my deficit-based lens and became more focused on teacher assets and how I could support them. In all post-observation conferences, I started out identifying a strength they observed in their lesson. For example, in a post-observation conversation with RF, after reviewing the evidence, she pointed out that she did not have ample collaborative strategies to enhance language learning. I then pointed out to her that her questioning forms advanced thinking and language use. Instead of looking for what was not working, I reconditioned my thinking to look for what was working. RF shared that this definitely boosted her confidence as a teacher (RF, interview notes, April 19, 2020).

As a result of these substantial changes, observations shifted from being evaluation-oriented to growth-oriented and from yearly or twice-yearly evaluations to continuous suggestions and redirection through conversations (L. Kayed, final memo, July 20, 2020). I shifted from recording all evidence and taking extensive notes on one or two lessons a year to watching for key “teaching points” and evidence from numerous shorter visits. Teachers made choices about next steps through engaging in conversations (Drago-Severson, 2012).

Transformational Coaching: Meaningful Conversations

A meaningful conversation offers the opportunity for shared dialogue rather than judgment. The conversation is better because we use evidence for reflection rather than perception. A meaningful conversation elicits stories, taps into experience, identifies new ways of thinking, and generates understanding (Starvos et al., 2018). My conversations with fellow leaders and teachers changed from guarded, inauthentic communication to honest and open genuine communications. Following Knight (2016), I fostered dialogue by trying to suspend my assumptions in a humble, empathetic, and curious spirit, which made the experience more thoughtful and collegial. The instructional leaders and the teachers in the CPR group shifted how they perceived evaluation and feedback because they found informal observations and ongoing conversations to be useful; according to Hale (2008), usefulness is the most important validity standard in an action and activist research project.

The other instructional leaders found the *Effective Conversation Guide* (Tredway & Argent, 2020) useful; RJ stated that the guide gave her a boost of confidence as a leader as she felt that the PAR experience helped her become fully aware of the process and that she could now provide better guidance for the teachers. RF shared that there was a big difference between previous evaluation experiences and the post-observation conversation: “I like conversation. It's much better. It shows that you want to support me rather than you just want to evaluate me" (L. Kayed, post-observation conversation, March 20, 2020). RF explained that the key was the different level of communication. MS seconded RJ's reflection and shared that his perception of feedback had changed, and his confidence as an educator had improved (L. Kayed, Post-observation conversation, March 20, 2020).

Teachers' perceptions of post-observation conversations were positive; as a result, teachers made individualized decisions to improve their teaching. Figure 12 presents the decisions teachers made for an improvement focus after post-observation conversations (L. Kayed, post-observation conversation, March 20, 2020). I observed that regardless of experience or expertise, teachers made decisions for improvement directedly related to the evidence. CPR members decided to focus on question forms, differentiated praise or feedback, improving use of technology, and collaborative strategies for teaching the language.

Post-observation conversations that are based on evidence from classroom observations provided a powerful tool for us to change our practices as leaders and teachers, what Starvos et al. (2018) describe as a conversation worth having. They say that an organization "lives and the lives of others flourish or flounder, one conversation at a time" (p. 2). The use of pragmatic evidence leads to iterative change (Cobb et al., 2018) and fosters the kinds of conversations in which the leader and the teacher are collaboratively analyzing data and setting the stage for teacher decisions. These practices coincide with how Aguilar's (2020) description of the three components to transformational coaching: (1) the leader or coach is attentive to their learning; (2) the leader addresses teacher's beliefs, practices, and way of being; and (3) the leader is committed to change a system and the people within them. As a result of post-observation

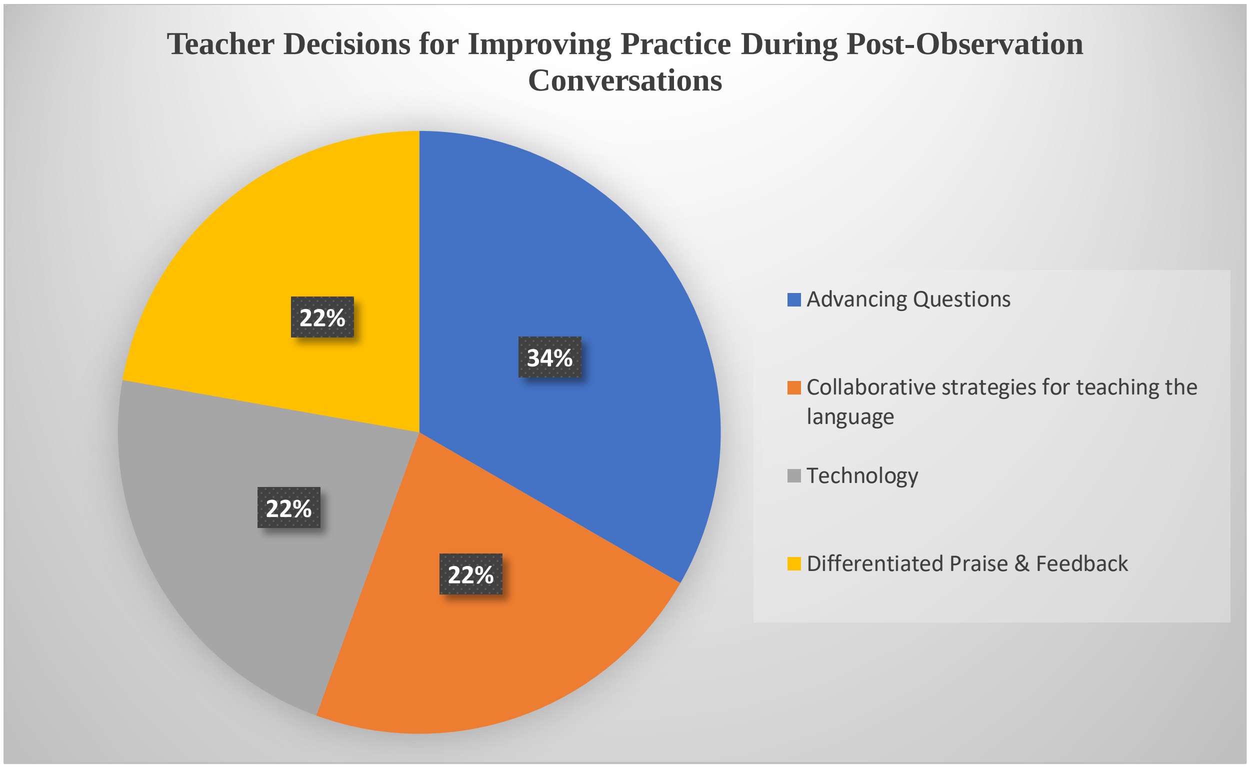


Figure 12. Decisions made by teachers for focus of improvement after post-observation decisions.

conversations, I found myself more engaged in learning how to be a better leader and coach, more attentive to teachers' thinking and beliefs, and even more committed to changing a system. Unfortunately, as John Lennon reminds us, "Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans." While we in the micro world of the CPR group were actively learning how to listen to each other, other administrators at the school were planning a re-organization that would interrupt our work in teacher evaluation. Nonetheless, we still have recommendations to share from our learning.

Recommendations for Co-Constructing a Meaningful Evaluation

Toward the end of PAR Cycle Two and after ample opportunity to experiment with the new practices, we decided on these recommendations for meaningful evaluation:

1. Evaluation rubric standards cannot be measured or evaluated in only one classroom visit. Since the observation rubric includes each standard, the rubric should be revised to support growth and development (Oakland Unified School District, 2017).
2. The teacher planning section (15% of the current IA rubric) should be reconstructed as a teacher portfolio entry and cannot be observed in class; the accumulated evidence should be included in a portfolio and used for post-observation conversations.
3. For teaching and the learning strategies (35% of the current IA rubric), teachers tend to showcase all the strategies mentioned on the observation rubric in a random and distracting way when an administrator visits; this needs revision to focus on teacher growth instead of performance in observations.
4. The evaluation form layout should match the Effective Post-Conversation Guide, and the title of that space changed from comments to strengthening points.

RJ believed “that the evaluation is placing a burden on the teachers to use all strategies in one observation,” and that the observation tool should be recreated to help the instructional leader shift to observing main teaching points at each visit and to observe for quality teaching rather than for quantity of strategies used (RJ, final interview notes, April 19, 2020). She suggested adding observation tools that could provide evidence of advancement and assessment questioning and of ensuring equitable engagement for all language levels, including attention to teacher talk versus students talk as language teachers tend to overlook student talk. She said, “We should emphasize the idea that when I attend a class, I need to see students speaking to students and writing. So the productive work should be more from the student's part” (RJ, final interview notes, April 19, 2020).

SD suggested that we diversify and increase the frequency of the observations to make the evaluation more meaningful and engaging for English teachers. By diversifying, she meant a variety of sources of input for the teacher evaluation. When I asked her to elaborate, she said:

> I mean, self-evaluation. We should start to evaluate ourselves to see if we meet the requested criteria or not. Then we can do peer evaluation and observation because from this evaluation we can learn from each other. And, to have more perspectives, we should also have students evaluate us because we need to know their needs. To give them the opportunity to voice the things they need so that we can easily understand them and then give them what they really need. I believe that a good evaluation system must reflect the complexity of teaching and learning discussions. (RJ, final interview notes, April 19, 2020).

In summary, we co-constructed a meaningful evaluation through analyzing the evidence-based observation and conversation processes. Interviews and community learning exchanges helped create a learning space for CPR members to better understand key factors that influence teacher practice. However, we were not able to speak with the administration about these recommendations. Our work was interrupted by a change in organizational design, and the micropolitical dynamics of the organization impeded our attempts to share what we learned.

Findings

While we made significant progress in using different observational and post-observation practices that we were primed to use in the next school year, our efforts were abruptly interrupted at the conclusion of PAR Cycle Two by a change in the school administration. As Weiss (1995) has said, the institutional often overtakes the interests, ideology, and information of a school or school system and subverts well-intended and productive activity. We had a common interest in a different evaluation matched with a re-informed ideology about why change was important, and we had concrete information about how to accomplish it. But we did not quite make it past the trial stage.

Because we were not able to move forward with our plan for changing the current evaluation, the findings show what we learned and how the micro-political environment sometimes halts forward progress. Authentic collaboration between teachers and leaders did result in useful observation and conversation processes that improved evaluation. However, democratic action spaces are fragile. In the end, the meso or institutional level interrupted the micro work and compromised our ability to move forward (Ball, 1987; Weiss, 1995).

Improving Teacher Evaluation: Collaborative Design

As a result of implementation and analysis of evidence from two cycles of inquiry, I present the two findings at the micro and meso levels. When teachers and leaders collaboratively participate in analyzing instructional and evaluation practices, they can collaboratively design substantive changes for evidence-based observations and post-observation conversation processes that improve teacher evaluation practices. CPR members shared in PAR Cycle One and PAR Cycle Two that the existing IA teacher *pro forma* evaluation process and required professional development impeded teacher growth (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016). After we instituted certain innovations, post-observation conversations: (1) improved the skills and knowledge of the instructional leaders; (2) shifted how teachers perceived evaluation and feedback and changed the locus of decision-making about next steps from principal to teacher; (3) improved relational trust. Instructional leaders had a new purpose for evaluation that was in concert with our purpose: to support teachers with knowledge and evidence so that teachers could identify key practices that will equitably support English language learners at all levels.

Evidence-based observation and conversations improved the skills and knowledge for both the observer and the teacher. The key concept behind these meaningful conversations is that the principal and teacher come together as complements to study the evidence and learn together. This is very different from the post-observation meetings I have seen in schools during my own career spanning two decades. It involves the observer, or instructional leader, stepping back as the authoritarian and being willing to listen and learn. The instructional leader takes on an inquiring role. The teacher decides which areas of improvement to focus on. It is this shift in the locus of decision-making that allows the creation of meaningful learning where two equals (teacher and instructional leader) can engage in useful conversation. MS describes the impact of these conversations saying:

> It brought us together, okay? We started to know more about each other. We started to connect more on a personal level and a professional level. It has also, that CPR work, has also enlightened me on new concepts and teaching philosophies actually. Also, to acquire

> certain attitudes inside and outside the classroom, of course in a teaching setting or an educational setting (MS, final member check, April 23, 2020).

Post-observation conversations shifted how teachers perceived evaluation and feedback. The purpose of the post-observation conversations was not to fight every battle but to focus the post-observation conversations on teacher practices. I opened and closed post-observation conversations with positives. I was flexible and allowed casual conversation as I did not want the conversation to have an official feel; rather, I wanted the experience to be open and reassuring. I shared evidence from observations and asked questions, followed by more targeted and specific questions based on the teacher's response. I solicited recommendations from the teacher for my own development and prompted teachers to make decisions for their own improvement based on the evidence I provided. I always concluded the post-observation conversation by asking the teacher what I can do to be more useful or supportive. This changed what used to be a post-observation meeting from an official meeting to a collaborative conversation.

Shifting how teachers perceived evaluation and feedback improved relational trust, my stance. How I questioned teachers was key to improving trust and creating a safe space for reflection and learning. MS describes this, saying:

> And another good thing is that the relationship between the HOD and the teacher has improved drastically. Okay, now we connect more. I can express my ideas or my opinions, and the HOD can also tell us about what they think of what she or he has seen in our classroom. So it's just a friendly talk and just to discuss things in a friendly manner, in a friendly environment, a friendly atmosphere, so we can at least be convinced of one another's point of views (MS, final member check, April 23, 2020).

Relational trust is key resource for school reform. Relational trust is rooted in respectful conversations that are marked by the instructional leader listening to what each teacher has to say and by taking teacher views into account when making decisions for future action. This interpersonal respect creates a space for conversations to thrive between instructional leaders and teachers (Bryk et al., 2010; Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

Democratic Action Spaces Are Fragile

Although this project was focused on teachers and leaders, we also saw how the micropolitical environment can interrupt important work. We were experimenting with a new process with a small number of teachers and other leaders and hoped to include more teachers and make our results known to others. While we three leaders developed trusted, collaborative relationships with three teachers and were advancing work in the micro world of the school, the meso world of the entire school bureaucracy was redesigning the leadership structure. This choice effectively interrupted our forward motion. Thus, democratic action spaces in which the principal as leader relies on collaborative, non-hierarchical leadership are fragile when operating within a larger political context where autonomy and participation are viewed as a threat (Ball, 1987).

A more concerted approach to implementing a meaningful evaluation requires a close analysis and understanding of the organizational structure and micro-political context. I had examined that context in the assets and challenges of the fishbone, but I did not pay full attention to the larger context because we were innovating and launching what I would call trial balloons in the department for which I was responsible at the school. I knew that the PAR work challenged the system of evaluation in the school. Through the process, small and targeted as it was, we pushed external (micro) and internal (meso) boundaries: “A boundary separates a system from its environment and acts as a means to control and manage the kinds of exchanges that pass between the system and its environment" (Caffyn, 2007, p. 206). Boundaries at the micro level became barriers to improvement. Shifting the locus of decision-making to teachers would have demanded substantial change in school norms and practices. Leaders more vested in hierarchical leadership and decisions were not ready for this change. While I experimented with an interpersonal style of leadership (Ball, 1987), other leaders adopted an authoritarian stance, which Ball describes as assertive and conflict-adverse. The authoritarian leader typically relies on current policies and processes to maintain and manage.

When our approaches clashed, the authoritarian leadership at the micro level overtook my interpersonal leadership at the meso level and derailed the action we had built for 9 months. Kilicoglu's (2018) study on democratic leadership revealed a strong relationship between leadership coherence and teachers' perceptions of democratic leadership. As a leadership team, we worked to build coherence among us to better our practices and support different practices for observing and conferring with teachers. However, those notions of collaborative action space were not acceptable to the meso level nor was the micro-political culture supportive. It is difficult to sustain a supportive cultural environment at the meso level for teachers and leaders as decision-makers for improvement, practitioners, and researchers in a hierarchal, authoritarian structure that requires the implementation of *proforma* evaluation practices. Figure 13 presents the elements of a meaningful evaluation process at the micro level and how the elements of the meso level can tip the scales and interrupt. As Weiss (1995) asserts: "Unless the institution is part of the change, adverse conditions and old ways will reassert themselves" (p. 589).

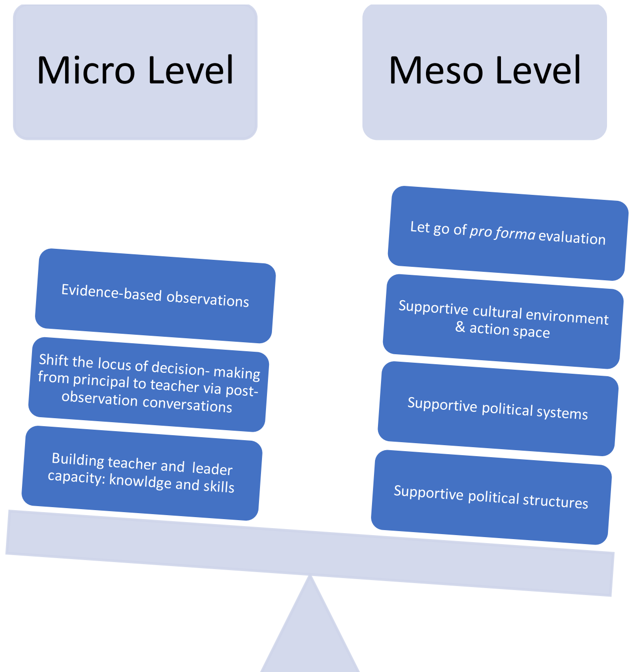


Figure 13. Meaningful evaluation process requires supports at micro and meso level.

Applying Organizational Theory to Findings

The teacher evaluation system at IA reflects a larger truth about the school culture that pertains to the second finding about the value and the fragility of democratic spaces for professional learning. The current IA teacher evaluation process embodied a school culture that values uniformity and conformity; through using this process, leaders maintain a bureaucratic, coercive culture. The traditional evaluation tool may be an example of institutional isomorphism by which organizations attempt to achieve collective similarity in policy or structure. It may also be argued that the organization is often unaware that it is becoming more similar to other schools that face the same set of environmental conditions, driven by institutional forces beyond their boundaries (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In some circles, this might be named coherence, but often such coherence is a mask for a policy structure that is only in service of the bureaucracy rather than the people in it. This process is employed by decision-makers to create an organization that conforms and/or excels in their practices. Using the teacher evaluation tool at IA, school leaders enforce uniformity and conformity in policies and procedures. The organizational actors, the CPR members who use the tool to evaluate teachers and the teachers who are assessed, determined that the evaluation process was not meaningful to their work. Instead, it should be more flexible and more collaborative to be useful to the ultimate goal of teacher improvement.

Organizational Structure and Political Context

This project took place in one of the International Schools of the International Academy (IA), the British and International Baccalaureate program, one of 11 schools in the organization that have international and national curricula. IA, established in 1947 as a prominent national private nonprofit school, has had significant growth over the previous 2 decades. The number of

Jordanian families choosing international schools for their children has increased significantly, shifting its organizational makeup.

The International Schools of IA struggle to thrive in a political environment that is somewhat antagonistic toward the comparatively new international schools, both at the national and internal organizational level. For example, teachers employed by the international schools of IA have different criteria and pay scales from teachers in the national programs. Teachers in the international programs must be fluent in English. They are required to pass an entrance examination in English regardless of their experience before applying to IA, and those with experience are preferred. However, the national and international schools of IA "compete not only for resources and customers, but for political power and institutional legitimacy" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 150).

The organizational structure at IA remains hierarchical and has minimally evolved over the past 7 decades due to a broader political, social, and cultural school context. The International Schools of IA are situated within a larger school community that imposes an external political force on school policies and procedures; institutional rules and policies function in the organizations as stabilizers. However, the bureaucratic policies and procedures are rarely amended and are adopted across the 11 schools within the organization irrespective of their different needs. As a result, like many formal and long-standing organizations, IA structures mirror normed institutional rules (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The organizational central leadership communicates policy with the rationale that unified policies and procedures eliminate conflict and competitiveness. Conversely, however, more autonomy would give space for individual schools to succeed and improve according to their individual needs rather than in a competitive and fragmented manner.

All 11 schools follow the same evaluation system with multiple evaluators and standards. While standardization is sometimes useful for organizational coherence, teachers see the policy as hierarchical and unresponsive to their professional needs. This is the epitome of mimetic isomorphism at play (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), copying one process from one system (i.e., national) to another (international) without regard for the individuality of each educational system. Thus, the evaluation process forces one entity in the organization to mimic the others. The justification for enforcing a uniform and standardized evaluation system is that differential pay scales are an issue, but the differential performance pay only widens the divide, competition, and antagonistic attitudes between the two programs. After careful study of the evaluation system in PAR Cycle One, the CPR group concurred that the evaluation system is not applicable nor relevant for the international schools as it does not attend to the needs of bilingual students or teachers nor does it support improving teachers in a multilingual community.

Organizational Environment and Culture

Because organizational culture revolves around the "history, tradition, normative expectations for behavior, beliefs, and values" (Cunliffe & Hatch, 2013, p. 62), the organizational culture shapes the organization's structure, policies, and procedures; how resources are allocated; and the role of technology within the organization. However, the shaping influence may happen in the reverse direction—the organization's structure, policies, and procedures can shape the culture. This may be best rephrased in asking: Which organizational factor was the cause of change? Does the culture influence structure and policies, or do the structure and policy shape culture? Probably both. Organizational culture can be a potential tool for cohesion, or as in this case, it can be coercive; but the line and the causal relationships are often hard to decipher. Coercive change implies that the organization adopts a political system in which those who have the power have the right to make decisions change. The IA General Administration is the umbrella group governing 11 schools, and they have the power to dictate policies or change as they see fit; the leadership choices strongly protect a culture of uniformity and conformity. In reality, it is a culture of coerced uniformity and conformity: school members "pretend" to conform while actually wanting to initiate change. If they do not fully resist, nonetheless, they do want change, and they want their ideas validated.

Subcultures or cultural pluralism may constitute a threat to organizational coherence due to multiple interest groups within an organization (Martin, 2002). Among the 11 schools, three are internationally focused; consequently, the organization may be viewed as a complex network of subsystems with boundaries overlapping and creating conflict (Caffyn, 2007). In addition, Jordanian society perceives international schooling as more prestigious with better future prospects for their children, and it is more lucrative for teachers to teach at international schools. International schools are culturally and socially favored because English is the global language of science, politics, and business. While the General Administration tries to suppress this competition between the National and International IA Schools, the larger macro systems in the country tend to work against their attempts. Thus, although their attempt to systematize evaluation was, on the surface, a cohesive action, in fact, the choice caused dissention. Our attempt to rethink the teacher evaluation process did not meet with favorable attitudes in the larger school community. As a result of change in the leadership of the entire organization, we had to curtail our efforts to change the evaluation system at the conclusion of PAR Cycle Two. In the micropolitical situation at all levels of the system, from our micro level group within the school to our roles in the set of international schools at IA, our experiment to shift the evaluation system could not survive because of the meso level hierarchical structures (Ball, 1987). As

Ingersoll (2003) indicates in his book on who controls teachers' work, decentralized schools have "more collegiality and cooperation among teachers and administrators and a more committed staff" (p. 223). Instead, our school system resorted to bureaucratic methods of control. They did not recognize that "if top-down policies hold teachers accountable for activities they do not control, they may harm the very thing they seek to improve—teacher performance" (Ingersoll, 2003, p. 237).

Progressing Forward

Our CPR activities were not able to proceed, but as a result of the PAR journey, the CPR members and I developed an entirely different view of meaningful and effective teacher observation, post-observation conversations, and evaluation. Effective and purposeful consistency is a large part of a leader's success; the observation protocol during the CPR was effective based on members' feedback. After interviewing the CPR members for the final time, the CPR members collectively believed that a meaningful teacher evaluation is linked to a stronger school community, improved practice both for instructional leaders and teachers, applicable focused feedback, and opportunities for professional growth (L. Kayed, final memo, July 20, 2020). The study of Supovitz et al. (2010) confirms that principals who work in collaboration alongside teachers who work as peers and foster a culture of collaboration and communication about instruction positively influence student learning.

In conclusion, the PAR Cycle One and Two data confirm that post-observation conversations changed how teachers perceived evaluation and feedback, and instructional leaders improved their skills and knowledge through evidence-based observation and conversation practices. Given a more receptive organizational culture, we believe that we could impact student learning for second language learners in an international school. Similar schools could benefit from establishing processes in which teachers—those closest to the work—make decisions about instruction and evaluation practices.

In Chapter 7, I analyze the findings in the PAR project that useful protocols for effective clinical supervision of teachers can become an embedded system or practice in the school culture if it is meaningful for teachers (Acheson & Gall, 2003; Saphier, 1993; Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). For the evaluation to meaningful for teachers, their voices must be equitably acknowledged and valued. “I believe that if teachers’ evaluation becomes meaningful, the school will be successful because teachers are the major component of making the system work in schools and to better develop the future of school communities” (SD, final meeting, July 18, 2020). However, without paying attention to the larger political system, we may work diligently in small groups but not be able to affect larger change.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

"We learn only by doing. There is a gigantic difference between the projects we imagine doing or plan to do and the ones we actually do." Nachmanovitch, 1990, p. 66

With Chapter 7, I conclude the participatory action research study with echoes to the start of the project as I revisit the literature in relation to the focus of practice, research questions, and theory of action for the participatory action research project and study. As I register my concluding thoughts and questions for possible further work, this chapter tells a story of possibility for more useful practices in observation and evaluation intersecting with institutional issues and leadership growth and insight.

Enacting Participatory Action Research

An important aim of the participatory action research (PAR) was to empower others to fully engage in the process, an uncommon practice in the international schools in which I have worked. That the co-practitioner researchers and I engaged in a process to rethink teacher evaluation and to improve teaching practices was, in and of itself, a strikingly different approach to the way our hierarchical systems typically work. If we shift the focus away from organizational "outcomes" to organizational "inputs," I consider this cogenerated process to be a small win, as it represents an important incremental change in an international setting (Weick, 1984). By relying on our collaborative experiences, authentic voices, and growing knowledge, we enacted Freire's (1972) *conscientização;* we co-developed a critical consciousness through a process of reflection and action or *praxis*. Through the co-constructed evaluation process, I, as the instructional leader, with three teachers and two other persons serving in supervisory roles, changed the power dynamics of principal to teachers and instructional coaches; as a result, we became collaborative partners and colleagues. The PAR project intentionally engaged CPR members in cycles of inquiry rooted in equity to analyze student classroom experiences and prior experiences in teacher evaluations. The PAR findings reflect the perspectives, priorities, culture, and concerns in an international school in Amman, Jordan.

The project took place in the International Academy where I was the principal. We directed the project activities at changing the observation and evaluation practices so that teachers would feel better supported to change classroom practices to address equitable language access for all students. We viewed the classroom practices and the evaluation system as two sides of the same coin. Using the PAR process, we identified the fundamental teaching knowledge and strategies teachers need to fully embrace all levels of language development and advancement in ELL settings. Then, we interrogated the current teacher evaluation system to determine how it might better serve teachers in their growth and development. The existing evaluation process was *pro forma* and contributed to teacher anxiety instead of their learning as professionals (Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016).

As outlined in Chapters 5 and 6, we, as a co-practitioner researcher (CPR team), engaged in two participatory action cycles of inquiry that included meetings with the six CPR team members, classroom observations, community learning exchanges, meetings, post-observation conversations about practice with individuals and groups of teachers, and reflection. The CPR members and I had regular meetings in both cycles of inquiry; despite brief interruptions from COVID-19, we met weekly to conduct PAR activities. I wrote memos during the PAR cycles of inquiry and had regular video conversations with an ECU professor for updates and details of my findings in the PAR Cycle Two. This was a small project and study in the context of a middle school where I was the principal. We intended to engage more teachers in the process after we launched what might be called probes or trial balloons to try out the initial processes (Moore et al., 2015). However, as I discussed in Chapter 6, the micropolitical situation in the school interrupted our ability to continue the project; we were attempting to change teachers' input in processes that are typically more hierarchical—observations and evaluations. Thus, the more flattened hierarchy of the project and study was a key factor in a teacher innovation project that we attempted and not representative of how teachers' work is usually controlled and managed in institutions (Ball, 1987; Ingersoll, 2003).

Discussion of PAR Findings

In this section, I revisit the theory of action and explore the data and findings with respect to the research questions and discuss the extant literature related to the two findings. The PAR project was guided by one overarching question: How do we engage English teachers in a meaningful evaluation process for improving practice that fully includes all levels of language development? To address that question, we examined how teachers improved their instructional practices through the observation and conversation process and how we collaboratively developed our capacities to improve and implement teacher evaluation practices.

The theory of action for the PAR project was twofold: (1) by engaging instructional leaders and teachers in reflective observations and providing teachers meaningful actionable feedback, instructional practices would improve; and (2) by engaging in authentic collegial conversations about the teacher evaluation with the persons most affected—the teachers and their supervisors—we could interrogate current practices and improve on the teacher evaluation process. The instructional conversations about practice and those about the evaluation process occurred simultaneously, and these complementary topics supported us in discussing complex change issues. We used iterative cycles of the PAR inquiry process to test out post-observation conversation practices and to tailor our support to the needs of ELL teachers. In the international setting where this PAR study took place, I cultivated relational trust to engage teachers and gave them the choice about having any observation considered in their annual evaluation. These regular meetings gave them a sense of safety and quelled some of the trepidation about the annual evaluation required by IA. As a result, we improved instructional practices that fully included all levels of language development, and we co-generated a design for a meaningful evaluation process.

Discussion of Research Questions in Connection with the Literature

As instructional leaders in the CPR group, the two other supervisors and I became well-versed in the use of the processes for observing classrooms and conducting post-observation conversations. As a result, teachers and supervisors perceived the process and feedback differently and found the conversations helpful. Concurrently, in PAR Cycle One, CPR members shared their beliefs about evaluation, and in PAR Cycle Two the CPR groups continued to reflect on their beliefs regarding evaluation.

Thus, teachers and supervisors benefited from using a clinical supervision model for observations and evaluations, and they translated new epistemological learning into practice. However, organizational micropolitics and barriers interrupted the change efforts. I next discuss how we improved teaching and evaluation practices through a clinical supervision model, how teacher epistemic stances shifted, and the how democratic space we created in our school was fragile.

Improving Equitable Teaching and Supervisor Practices

Using the PAR process, we identified the vital teaching skills, strategies, and knowledge that teachers need to fully embrace all levels of language development and advancement in ELL settings. As three instructional leaders worked with three teachers, we shifted our typical supervisory practices to a clinical supervision model and used evidence-based observations and more effective conversation practices. By individualizing the experience by using classroom evidence, we were able to structure post-observation conversations differently; instead of providing feedback, we coached teachers to make decisions about their next steps (Gall & Acheson, 2013; Glickman, 2002; Tredway & Argent, 2020).

As a result, post-observation conversations shifted how teachers perceived feedback; at the same time, as evidence-based observations and conversations shifted CPR members' beliefs, CPR members improved skills, knowledge, and motivation. Our conversations confirmed the research on the ineffectiveness of walkthroughs and the usefulness of short evidence-based observations (Grissom et al., 2013). The PAR evidence confirms that walkthroughs and checklists are ineffective for changing teacher practice (Marsh et al., 2005). In PAR Cycle Two, CPR members described the new process using the different protocols for conversations as "helpful," "boosts my confidence," and "an opportunity to learn" (LK, member check in, July 20, 2020). As instructional leaders used evidence-based observations and conversations, supervisors coached teachers to make decisions about what they should change.

We held collegial conversations about the evaluation process. "Peers influence each other when they engage in collaborative discussions about their professional work" (Supovitz et al., 2010, p. 36). Through the collaborative discussions about the evaluation process, we developed a level of trust and collaboration leading to spontaneous contributions. By elevating interpersonal respect and valuing teacher voices, we created a space for conversations to thrive between instructional leaders and teachers, a necessary pre-condition of any reform effort (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). As Bryk et al. (2010) demonstrated in local school reform efforts, "relational trust across a school community constitutes an overarching social resource for growth of [other] essential supports [for school change]" (p. 88). In our case, that relational trust enhanced our joint professional capacity, and while I as the leader was a driver of change, the ways we also got inside the classroom black box of teaching and learning together through observations and conversations enabled us to hold productive discussions about how to revamp our evaluation practices (Cuban, 2013; Fraser & Le Donné, 2017).

As we shifted the locus of post-observation decision-making from the instructional leader to the teacher, we challenged long-held professional beliefs and practices. As instructional leaders, we not only became better informed about the problems of the current IA evaluation system, but also the teachers felt more motivated and empowered to tell us what could be more useful. While the conversations were emotionally charged at times, the PAR process ultimately helped CPR members learn how to be open and vulnerable with one another. Even though we supervisors felt uncomfortable and defensive in a few instances—especially when teachers expressed their sentiments and beliefs about the school's evaluation policy or described their experience of being evaluated—the process resulted in a much clearer understanding of teachers' experiences. In turn, that helped the entire CPR team build stronger and more meaningful relationships that led the CPR members to positively change attitudes and beliefs regarding observations, conversations, and evaluation. The constraints that teachers often feel as being in the middle between school leaders and students diminished as did the hierarchy of the supervisors and teachers (Ingersoll, 2003). As we gradually converted hierarchical relationships to more collegial relationships and analyzed evaluation as an organizational routine that was ineffective, we were practicing key tenets of distributed leadership (Spillane & Coldren, 2011).

From New Teacher's Epistemological Frames to Practice

Teacher epistemology or the process of "coming to know" can be a vehicle for changing practice; teachers with relativistic epistemological beliefs are more effective because their approaches to knowledge and learning are not fixed but flexible (Barnett, 2011). Finding ways to shift teacher epistemic stances—what is sometimes termed social capital, cognitive capital, or professional capital—is necessary to provide a higher standard for teaching (Costa et al., 2014; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Russ et al., 2016) discuss what constitutes teacher learning: "it might be productive to understand teacher learning as requiring the adjustment and tuning of existing knowledge and practices" (p. 423). In this study, the way teachers learned how their epistemological grounding was centered in a socio-cultural context became a linchpin for their growth and development. The stances that teachers adopted toward teaching and learning shaped their relationships with their leaders and peer teachers and shaped the classroom practices they adopted and the environments they created for students.

Teacher learning may be defined as "the refinement of everyday knowledge [as that learning influences] practice" (Russ et al., 2016, p. 426). CPR members deemed that ELL teacher learning as a result of the evaluation was superficial because it did not address important concepts of language teaching and learning. Superficiality of ELL teacher evaluation was due to evaluation practices that emphasized coverage of large quantities of fragmented observational information to complete *pro forma* evaluation criteria. CPR members realized that teacher knowledge is deepened when it focuses on the central ideas of language learning and teaching. For teachers, as they made clear connections between theory and practice, they engaged in social construction of their knowledge base, and their epistemological stances became more fluid. The CPR group proposed that depth in ELL teacher evaluation practices would be more beneficial to their learning because they could have a more meaningful conversations rooted in evidence; as a result, they would more likely expand their knowledge as teachers.

In these ways, their epistemological grounding shifted from unidirectional to reciprocal—from the supervisor or the more knowledgeable Other typically using her expertise in these situations—to guide teachers (Vygotsky, 1978) to a more collaborative learning environment in which we "traded off" expertise and instead co-constructed knowledge (Bryk et al., 2010). "The significance of inclusive leadership that nurtures opportunities for teacher influence in school matters … places a value on sustained efforts to nurture a strong school-based professional community to support efforts in improving classroom instruction" (p. 68). Thus, we were able to harness the energy of three teachers and the school administrators who supervised them toward dynamic learning and the reciprocal learning among us that benefited students. However, changes at the institutional level curtailed our efforts to fully enact what we were learning about flattening the hierarchy and sharing knowledge.

Democratic School Spaces Are Fragile

While we were engaging in reciprocal learning and practicing non-hierarchical relationships, the meso level of the organization had an impact on our ability to fully enact our learning about improving teaching practices and reframing the evaluation process. As a democratic action space in which I as the principal authorized collaborative, non-hierarchical leadership, we found that our efforts were indeed tenuous. In fact, such democratic leadership spaces are fragile as new learning and ways of acting take time to embed in organizational routines (Spillane & Coldren, 2011). Too often, others within a firmly hierarchical or authoritarian structure view this kind of leadership shift as a threat (Ball, 1987). More generally, the findings of Chapter 6 confirm that upper management or leadership can overtake the interests, ideology, and information of a school or school system and sabotages well-intended and productive activity (Weiss, 1995).

An abrupt turnover in upper school management resulting in multiple changes in leadership positions at all 11 schools of IA disrupted our progress. These actions affected the positive school climate we had co-created, demotivated school staff, and undermined the work in which the CPR team was heavily invested. Thus, while we had emerging results about how and what to change, I was re-assigned to a different school and could not continue the study. Changes in schools are always a factor in action research as we have to adapt and be flexible, but this change was too severe. Because it was participatory activist research, the shift had a deleterious effect as participants had to conform to institutional pressures. As the summer work proceeded and we continued to hope for the possibility of continuing, I realized that there were no opportunities to inhabit what Hakim Bey has called “temporary autonomous zones” or to continue the work inconspicuously (Hakim Bey, 2010). Two CPR group teachers were willing to continue with PAR Cycle Three; however, one teacher and the instructional leaders distanced themselves from any form of communication for fear of the repercussions of continuing the work amidst a complex and shifting school political environment. In MS’s final member check, he directly asked that we do not talk about the latest change in leadership and events at the school. I informed him that I would not put him in this position and that we would only talk about his views of the process as an educator away from the developments at the school. This incident saddened me as it suddenly became definite that the fragile CPR action space had ruptured (L. Kayed, final memo, July 20, 2020).

Hale (2001) raises these issues for activist action researchers:

1. What about when you’re studying powerful people and institutions with whom you do not identify ethically or politically?

2. What if you uncover information or analysis that could be detrimental to the interests of the very people with whom you have developed a privileged relationship? (p. 15).

In confronting these issues, we did not identify with the decisions; however, if we continued with our inquiry, it might have been detrimental to the persons with whom I had close relationships in the PAR study. Thus, in the best interests of all, we agreed that we had learned personally and professionally, but we would not continue.

Democratic school leaders create democratic school spaces by engaging school community members in an ongoing dialogue for school improvement. In democratic spaces, administrators, teachers, and students feel central to the school improvement journey and are willing to take risks by sharing their beliefs, apprehensions, and struggles. When their voices are acknowledged, school community members feel valued and integrated into the school organization. Creating this democratic space is central to the work of equity in education. While we enacted that space in multiple ways, our relationships and actions were emerging and still nascent because we were experimenting with a small change effort (Bryk et al., 2015). But our relatively small capacity-building effort could not withstand the administrative decisions. Democratic school spaces are fragile because they cannot survive without democratic leadership; without embedded, equitable policies that protect autonomous experiences in everyday school life, a democratic space can wither.

Implications for Practice, Policy, and Research

The participatory action research (PAR) study aimed to support teachers to teach English equitably through a meaningful, actionable process. In the process, we co-generated a meaningful evaluation process for improving practices that fully include all levels of language development. The aim thus had two implicit steps: to engage a selected group of English teachers and instructional leaders to use the iterative cycles of the PAR inquiry process to test and develop the model and then to share this model across the school.

Implications for Practice

In hierarchal forms of teacher evaluation, teachers' needs or reflections are not considered, and the teacher is essentially silenced. Teachers, therefore, become technicians concerned with executing points on a *pro forma* evaluation rather than intellectuals involved in questioning their own teaching and the context in which it takes place (Paryani, 2019; Rowan & Raudenbush, 2016; Smyth, 1991). To shift the evaluation process, teachers and administrators should regularly assess the quality of evaluation to see if teachers have an autonomous and dynamic part in the evaluation process. Thus, preparation programs for administrators should provide instructional leaders in clinical supervision with proven protocols for observation and evaluation techniques including evidence-based observations, reflective skills, and effective post-observation conversations. As a result, the nature of professional learning as daily and ongoing could be redefined as regular observations and frequent conversations become an iterative process of improvement. Teachers should make decisions for self-development through the observation and conversation processes as is useful in adult learning (Drago-Severson, 2012). Finally, teacher evaluation should be closely aligned with teacher learning and be differentiated according to the stages of individual teacher career cycles and for different levels of experience within a school system.

Implications for Teacher Evaluation Policy

Effective policy development, according to Walberg (1982), is comprehensive, participatory, and long-range; open to phased implementation; internally consistent with its goals; and indicative of the commitment of time and resources that it requires for success (p.

359). Hickcox et al. (1988) clearly advocate for teacher involvement in policy development by suggesting: “An appraisal system developed jointly between supervisors and teachers has a better chance of incorporating diverse but relevant points of view than a system developed by top management alone. The greater the opportunity for participation by individuals affected by a decision, the greater the potential for acceptability of the decision” (Hilcox et al., 1988, p. 66). Above all, instructional leaders and teacher concerns must continuously be considered in a cyclical manner; school policy should clearly state how policy is to be constructed and how often policy is to be examined and revised.

The replication of this process in other international schools can offer a clearer perspective in the area of policymaking and can bring to light the relationship between the limitations posed by hierarchal political school contexts and collaborative policymaking.

Recommendations for Further Research

I suggest transferring the participatory action research process to different international school settings with different political contexts. An exploration of the effect of preparing instructional leaders and teachers to use reflective clinical supervision in conjunction with a content specific would shed light on the importance of such an initiative. Insider researchers using the PAR methodology could benefit from this process as Paryani (2019) determined in her study in Thailand. In addition, studies that focus on the relationships that exist between teacher learning and teacher evaluation results would enhance both practices.

The second set of research implications has to do with equitable language practices. Whether or not being a native English speaker plays a part in teacher evaluation treatment in international settings is important given the emerging significance of equitable classroom dialogue as a focus. In addition, I suggest researching equitable assessment of ELLs and the impact of post-observation conversations with their ELL teachers to gain deeper understanding of how equitable practices can be enhanced in language classrooms and other content areas.

Personal Leadership Development

I believe that the PAR work has increased my self-confidence as a leader because I had the opportunity to witness first-hand the power of intentional collaborative research and practice. Changes in the meso structure taught me a great deal about the tenuousness of leadership. As an instructional leader, I often thought that it was my duty to be the source of knowledge. I have learned from the PAR work that "people's wisdom" and guided conversations are more effective for building teacher knowledge and capacity than intricate post-evaluation feedback notes. As researcher practitioner, I came to realize that I must honor the voice and knowledge of others more than try to be the sole source of knowledge as a leader.

At the end of PAR Cycle One, I was reflecting on the PAR work with the English department head, and I asked her if she thought the post-observation conference was helpful and if the CPR work has shifted her leadership in any way. She responded that it absolutely had helped as she gained knowledge and found a "clear path on how to observe and evaluate teachers" through the questioning protocol. RJ stated that she became " a better supervisor and a better observer." We both concluded that irrespective of the evaluation tool, valuing teacher voice and input after the observation through questioning had greater meaning and value than focusing on a completed form with checked off boxes. Building the capacity of teachers and leaders so they engage in the clinical supervision process with similar mindsets—a willingness to listen, reflect, learn, and act—is critical to my learning.

Three shifts in instructional leader practices stand out. First, I changed from taking general and broad notes on one or two lessons a year per teacher to watching for key "teaching points" in each visit. I shifted from guarded, inauthentic communication with teachers to open dialogue based on evidence. Finally, I completely altered my view of when and how to observe; I moved from yearly or twice-yearly evaluations to regular observations and continuous suggestions and redirection, culminating in a meaningful, embedded change in practice. These changes mean that we can experience an ongoing conversation about practice, whether structured or informal, and that this is the ongoing professional learning at the heart of school reform. When looking back on the PAR journey, I perceive ingrained new shifts in my thinking as a leader from the intensity of the experience.

Onward and Upward

Writing a conclusion at this point of my journey as a research practitioner is complex because there is no definitive end. What is definitive is that this project is the beginning of a new era in my educational career as it has altered my lens and developed my leadership in many ways, most importantly as a research practitioner and an equity warrior. Undertaking this research study has been an invaluable learning experience. I have gained understanding of the nature of research and of the cyclical, nonlinear, and sometimes anarchic nature of the research process that Hunter et al. (2013) describe as "messy, iterative, and generative." I have learned, for example, that things do not fit neatly into categories and that research can be challenging, at times tedious, and at other times immensely rewarding and enlightening.

This PAR took place while historical events unfolded – at the macro level the pandemic and at the meso institutional level, and the full possibilities of this PAR were not realized due to micro political constraints. However, my understanding of international leadership has deepened: I misguidedly thought my focus would be on developing instructional leadership, but in fact my micro-political leadership ripened unexpectedly. Because of COVID-19, educators have a golden opportunity to design better school systems and policies to overcome inequities. Key inequities highly apparent in international school systems in Jordan are the digital divide and the English language gap. It is no longer acceptable for inequities in teacher preparation and home environments to translate into inequities in school environments. We are treading new territory in education, and this is an opportunity to embed evaluation systems to overcome educational, language, and digital divides in international education. Unfortunately, international private school districts operating with a business mindset do not listen to what school instructional leaders have to say nor do they believe in what they need to change if this threatens the hierarchal system they cling to.

I find solace knowing that the work of this PAR study has planted seeds for new thinking and changed beliefs that can return stronger when the soil is suited to the seeds. The PAR helped change CPR members' beliefs about the power of teacher voice and the power of conversation and dialogue. As they experienced first-hand what it looks like to shift the locus of decision-making from the leaders to the teachers for authentic improvement, their community learning experiences improved their social capital, relational trust, teacher capacity, and confidence. Once the micropolitical arena, the soil, is suited to these beliefs and thoughts, change could become the school's reality.

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APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board
4N-64 Brody Medical Sciences Building· Mail Stop 682
600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** · rede.ecu.edu/umcirb/

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: Leila Kayed
CC: Matthew Militello
Date: 7/21/2020
Re: UMCIRB 19-001616
Engaging English Teachers to Improve Practice: Reinventing how Teachers and Leaders Cogenerate Equitable Practices for Language Development

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 7/21/2020. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category # 2b.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

Document	Description
Interview Protocol(0.01)	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions
IRBInformedConsentAdultKayed (IRB).doc(0.03)	Consent Forms
Observation Tool Appendix B Kayed.docx(0.01)	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions
Participation Face to Face Invitation Script(0.03)	Recruitment Documents/Scripts
Thesis Chapters 1-4(0.01)	Study Protocol or Grant Application

For research studies where a waiver or alteration of HIPAA Authorization has been approved, the IRB states that each of the waiver criteria in 45 CFR 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (2)(i) through (v) have been met. Additionally, the elements of PHI to be collected as described in items 1 and 2 of the Application for Waiver of Authorization have been determined to be the minimal necessary for the specified research.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418
IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL APPROVAL LETTER

التاريخ 18/ 8 / 2019
الرقم: 8 / 2018-2019

International Schools of Islamic Educational College
المدارس الدولية لمدارس الكلية العلمية الإسلامية
(بريطاني – بكالوريا دولية)

مدارس
الكلية العلمية الإسلامية
الجبيهة

August 17, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

Islamic Educational College Schools recognizes the benefits of participating in relevant, well-designed research studies proposed by qualified individuals. Approval for conducting such studies is based primarily on the extent to which substantial benefits can be shown for IEC Schools and its mission of educating students. The purpose of this letter is to notify you of the approval to use conduct your dissertation study titled, "ENGAGING ENGLISH TEACHERS TO IMPROVE PRACTICE: REINVENTING HOW TEACHERS AND LEADERS CO-GENERATE EQUITABLE PRACTICES FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT", with participants in our schools. We also give permission to utilize spaces at IEC school to collect data and conduct interviews for her dissertation project.

The project meets all of our school/district guidelines, procedures, and safeguards for conducting research on our campus. Moreover, there is ample space for Leila Kayed to conduct her study and her project will not interfere with any functions of Islamic Educational College Schools. Finally, the following conditions must be met, as agreed upon by the researchers and IEC schools:

- Participant data only includes information captured from the state data collection strategies.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Participants can choose to leave the study without penalty at any time.
- Any issues with participation in the study are reported to the school administration in a timely manner.
- An executive summary of your findings is shared with the school administration once the study is complete.

In addition to these conditions, the study must follow all of the East Carolina University IRB guidelines.

We are excited to support this important work.

Respectfully,

Dr. Jumana Abu Hijla
Superintendent, Islamic Educational College Schools

Director General
Of IEC Schools
Dr.Jumana Abu Hijleh

APPENDIX C: CITI PROGRAM COURSE CERTIFICATION

e (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

East Carolina University

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wc27de3ce-ad1f-4c5c-b055-b240d0d1c8bb-31795330

APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: ENGAGING ENGLISH TEACHERS TO IMPROVE PRACTICE THAT FULLY INCLUDES ALL LEVELS OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN A K-12 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Principal Investigator: Dr. Mathew Militello
Institution, Department or Division: East Carolina University, Educational Leadership,
Address: 220 Ragsdale Hall, Mail Stop 515East Carolina University
Telephone #: 252-328-5279
Study Research Coordinator: Leila N. Kayed
Telephone #: 919-341-8235 or +0962 079 7777 261

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) **and** (IEC) Islamic Educational College, Amman, Jordan study issues related to society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. To do this, we need the help of volunteers who are willing to take part in research.

The purpose of my participatory action research (PAR) project is to increase the efficacy of English teaching and learning by engaging English Language teachers and instructional leaders in cogenerating and implementing a meaningful evaluation process for improving practice that fully includes all levels of language development in an international bilingual setting.

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?

The purpose of this research is to engage teachers and instructional leaders like yourself in a community learning exchange to cogenerate and implement a meaningful evaluation process for English Language teachers in an international bilingual setting. You are being invited to take part in this research because you are an English teacher or instructional leader at IEC. The decision to take part in this research is yours to make. By doing this research, we hope to learn:

4. To what extent do teachers improve their instructional practices for English Language learning?
5. To what extent do the English Language Heads of Departments (HODs) and instructional leaders develop the capacity (knowledge, skills, beliefs, motivation) to implement effective teacher evaluation practices?

6. To what extent will the leadership team and head of departments demonstrate engagement and capacity to use the process?

If you volunteer to take part in this research, you will be one of about **11** people to do so.

Are there reasons I should not take part in this research?

I understand I should not volunteer for this study if I am not an English teacher or an instructional leader at (IEC), Islamic Educational College.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?

You can choose not to participate.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?

The research will be conducted at Islamic Educational College in Amman, Jordan. You will need to come to Islamic Educational College in Amman, Jordan time, during the study. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 60 hours over the next 18 months, that is approximately 3 hours a month.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to do the following:

- You will answer questions that will be asked and/or participate in interviews or surveys that may be conducted, as well as participate in focus groups in which participants may be asked to take part.
- Assess current evaluation policies at IEC before data collection begins.
- Record digital stories that need to be kept for the duration of the study; 18 months. Audio and videotaping will be implemented, and photographs will be taken of the participants, only I and the agencies overseeing this study will have access to these, the tape or photograph will not be identifiable, the tapes or photographs will be kept for two years after the study is closed they will be digitally destroyed.
- The participant will be given the opportunity to agree to opt in or out of these procedures.

What might I experience if I take part in the research?

We don't know of any risks (the chance of harm) associated with this research. Any risks that may occur with this research are no more than what you would experience in everyday life. Other people who have taken part in this type of research have experienced
By participating in this research study, you may also experience these benefits.
There may not be any personal benefit to you, but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?

We **will not** be able to pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.

Will it cost me to take part in this research?
It will not cost you any money to be part of the research.

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?
ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that you took part in this research and may see information about you that is normally kept private. With your permission, these people may use your private information to do this research:

- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research and may need to see research records that identify you.

How will you keep the information you collect about me secure? How long will you keep it?
The security of data collected and analyzed during the course of the study will be maintained confidentially throughout the project. In addition, all transcriptions and recordings of interviews, meeting notes, and memos will be stored digitally, and password protected to one device which no one but myself has access to. All participants will be anonymous, and they will be given symbolic names during the study.

What if I decide I don't want to continue in this research?
You can stop at any time after it has already started. There will be no consequences if you stop and you will not be criticized. You will not lose any benefits that you normally receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?
The people conducting this study will be able to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator at (919) 341-8235 or at +0962 079 7777 261 days, between 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director for Human Research Protections, at 252-744-2914

Is there anything else I should know?
Most people outside the research team will not see your name on your research record. This includes people who try to get your information using a court order.

I have decided I want to take part in this research. What should I do now?
The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.

- I know that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, I am not giving up any of my rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.

Participant's Name (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above and answered all of the person's questions about the research.

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

Principal Investigator (PRINT) ***Signature*** ***Date***
(If other than person obtaining informed consent)

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION TOOL

Observation Tool

Observer: ________________

Observation Notes

Date	
School	
Time	
Observation **(Teacher or Meeting)** **[CODE]**	

Demographics	
Context of Setting	

Time	**Selective Verbatim Notes of Observation**	**Annotations and Codes**

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to meet with me today. I appreciate your willingness to participate in this interview and will limit the time to one hour.

My name is (Matt Militello or Len Annetta or Charity Cayton). I will serve as the moderator for the interview. I am conducting research as a faculty member at East Carolina University. The interview is part of an evaluation to assess your thinking, learning, and practice about the improvement work you are doing in Project I4 and the associated ECU coursework.

Disclosures:

- Your participation in the study is voluntary. It is your decision whether or not to participate and you may elect to stop participating in the interview at any time.
- All information collected will be kept confidential. Any information collected during the session that may identify any participant will only be disclosed with your prior permission. A coding system will be used in the management and analysis of the focus group data with no names or school identifiers associated with any of the recorded discussion.
- The interview will be conducted using a semi-structured and informal format. Several questions will be asked about both the individual knowledge and skills gained and the organization practices used. It is our hope that everyone will contribute to the conversation.
- The interview will last approximately 60 minutes.

Interview Questions

Principal's Interview Questions (@ ECU, Summer Learning Exchange):

1) Describe the learning from the Summer Learning Exchange:
    a. Name 2-3 specific learning experiences that you engaged in and tell us
        i. What you learned?
        ii. If, and how, your practice as a school leader will change as a result of these experiences?

    b. Tell us about your interactions with your instructors
        i. What did you learn from the instructors?
        ii. How might you utilize their expertise in the future?

2) Describe your knowledge, skills, and dispositions around engaging STEM teachers in the teacher evaluation process outlined in Project I4.

a. What have you learned about the specific aspects of the teacher evaluation process?
b. Rate and talk to us about your skills at:
    i. Pre conference meeting with teachers
    ii. Ability to observe and documents effective STEM teaching practices and
    iii. Post conference meeting with teachers
c. What do you still want to know more about? What learning or experiences will help you be more successful

3) How will you engage with your teachers with this framework back in your school?

Principal's Interview Questions (@ Principal's School Site):

1) Rate and describe the learning from the on-line ECU courses you took this semester.
    a. Describe anything you implemented into your practice as a result of this course.

2) How did you interact with your Project I4 Coach this semester?
    a. Was the coaching effective?
    b. Describe anything you implemented into your practice as a result of this coaching.

3) Describe your experience with the Virtual Reality Gaming scenario [Refer to VR scores].
    a. What did you learn from the scenarios?
    b. How would you improve the scenarios?
    c. Describe anything you implemented into your practice as a result of this VR experience.

4) Describe your interactions with your fellow Project I4 Principals across the country—the Networked Improvement Community].
    a. Describe anything you implemented into your practice as a result of the interaction with your NIC.

Principal's Post Observation Interview Questions (@ Principal's School Site):

ECU researchers will talk notes during observations of the school principals. These notes will be used for the post observation interview.

1) What were your specific goals with the evaluation we observed today?
    a. Tell us about the pre-conference meeting you have with the teacher
    b. Why did you decide to focus of these goals?

2) Share with us your observations of the lesson.
    a. What did you see?
    b. What did you document?

3) What will you say and provide to the teacher in the post observation conference with the teacher?

4) What aspects of the teacher evaluation process do you still need assistance with?

APPENDIX G: EFFECTIVE CONVERSATIONS PROTOCOL

EFFECTIVE CONVERSATIONS

"We come to praise; we come to learn; we come to have conversations about practice"
Frank Lyman

Lynda Tredway

Based on research and tools form
Glickman, C. (2003). *Leadership for learning.* Alexandria VA: ASCD
Bloom, G.S., Castagna, C. L. , Moir, E., & Warren, B. (2005) *Blended coaching: Skills and strategies to support principals.* Thousand Oaks, CA.: Corwin Press.
Saphier, J.
Special thanks to Jim Warnock of Research for Better Teaching for input.
Note on pronouns: We have not fully converted to pronoun use for persons who identify they and their as pronouns of choice.

OVERVIEW

A conversation (formal or informal) that follows an observation (also formal or informal) has several components that include preparation for observation, observation with tool that collects evidence, data analysis and preparation for conversation, and, finally, the conversation. Think about the parts of the conference as we think about parts of a lesson and "task analyze" the approach. Obviously, the conversation following an observation is premised on **establishing trust between the teacher and the observer**. Trust is enhanced by the observer's ability to have a substantive reflective conversation about practice and provide useful **data and coaching questions** that support the teacher's reflection.

Note that the conversation following a relatively short observation (10-20 minutes) may be different than the actual formal post-conference for evaluation purposes. Because the formal process of evaluation in a state or district process requires written evaluation using a prescribed format, that conversation may require a different process than a conversation following an informal observation. However, an administrator can use the informal observations to build a set of evidence that can serve both the teacher and the administrator for the formal evaluation process. Through observations and conversations that occur throughout a school year, sustaining trust in the total process can deepen through frequent observations and conversations about practice. A key guideline: Follow-up conversations should be held as close as possible to the date of the observation.

There is no one right way to have a conversation. However, the formats we introduce are useful for **most** conversations. Some conversations require coaching moves, as the teacher may have not made changes in practice after several attempts to observe and provide feedback. Or, in some cases, a teacher has done something that is egregious which requires administrator intervention. As one administrator said: *Every principal has to analyze the staff and decide how you can have a coach role and when you have to be clear about your administrator-evaluator role and have someone else on staff take on the coaching role.*

The suggestions offer guidance, but not "rules". Every teacher is different, and knowing how each teacher learns/thinks is vital to setting up the trusting relationship necessary for any conversation.
NOTE: See **hyperlinks in the text for deeper explanations.**

GENERAL PREPARATION FOR CONVERSATION AFTER OBSERVATION

The primary objective of the conversation is to **support the teacher to (1) analyze the data from the observation; (2) make decisions about what s/he proposes to change; and (3) make a clear plan to improve instructional practice**. We, as administrators and coaches, have been schooled to give "feedback", and teachers often say they want feedback. However, Project I^4 posits that what teachers want is more consistent and deeper attention to their teaching so that the conversation uses the evidence from the observation to provide a "tailor-made" observation and conversation process (Paryani, 2019). Thus, the administrator's objective is not to give feedback about what the administrator thinks should change. The main objective is to support the teacher to talk about his/her practice so that s/he can make decisions about what to change. Typically, with veteran teachers, the observer can proceed and engage in cognitive coaching, supporting the veteran to draw on his/her knowledge and skill base to make decisions. For novice teachers that may be different; they are new to instructional practices. Thus, supporting their analyses and decisions about changing practice(s) is often necessary as they do not yet have a repertoire of knowledge and skills to fully make decisions.

If the observation and conversation are used for the formal observation required for the evaluation process, there is considerable value in a substantive pre-observation or planning conference. A fruitful planning conference supports the teacher to have a more thoughtful, well-planned lesson and a more productive post observation conversation. Attached is a guideline for conducting a planning conference that moves teacher thinking from the activity teaching to the learning objective/outcome of the lesson.

The following are steps after the observation:

Step One: ANALYZE THE DATA/EVIDENCE from observation
Any analysis is premised on an observer collecting observable, **objective**, non-judgmental data to analyze in preparation for the conversation. Analyzing the data helps the observer decide on an objective/purpose for the conversation. Even if the district evaluation tool does not require evidence, effective administrators should use evidence-based observation tools (and not checklists or other judgmental tools).

To prepare for the conversation with the teacher, the administrator can make choices about analyzing the data: send teacher the data before the conversation, analyze for the first time when you meet together, or share what you, as observer, have analyzed. There is no one right way to present the data, but this question is critical: What factual evidence does the observation yield?. The important part is that you use objective data and share that data/evidence with the teacher. The data should not include any notes to yourself or questions that may indicate pre-judgment.

Step Two: Think about the APPROACH for the conversation based on Glickman. The approach informs the kinds of questions you ask and how you ensure that the teacher makes decisions about what to do. Two of the four approaches apply to most teachers.

- **Direct-informational**: Teacher who needs more information in order to make decisions about an improvement choice. In other words, the knowledge base of the teacher may not include what s/he needs to know to make improvement. Typically, a novice teacher or a veteran who does not know current thinking can benefit from coaching. If the conversation requires that you provide specific instructional direction, ask permission to be instructional -- *Is it all right if I provide instructional options?*
- **Collaborative**: Teacher who is knowledgeable about practice and for whom the evidence is supportive. The conversation is two-way. The responsibility of the observer (now coach) is to ask the kinds of coaching questions that elicit teacher talk and teacher decisions.

Think about the range of coaching stances from instructional to facilitative coaching, remembering that **transfer to teacher practice** is the objective. GATHER MATERIALS Something may emerge from the data analysis that the observer does in advance that may require materials for deeper understanding or next steps. Prepare materials with a copy for you and for the teacher. You may or may not use in the conversation; use your judgment about providing materials. Alternatively, keep a list as you talk and summarize the materials you can provide to the teacher.

Step Three: HHHHH PREPARE AN OPENING QUESTION FOR CONVERSATION: BEYOND ASKING "HOW DO YOU THINK THE LESSON WENT?"

Preparing a **thoughtful opening question** for the conversations can alleviate the tension that an administrator sometimes feel sat the beginning of the post-observation conversation. The question depends on the type of post-conference approach that you use: (1) direct-control (2) directive-informational (3) collaborative or (4) nondirective (Glickman, 2002). Most conversations fall in category 2 or 3 of Glickman and correspond to the instructional to facilitative range of coaching in the *Blended Coaching* (Bloom et al., 2005).

Depending upon the type of approach you use (See Glickman chart), start with this introduction:
"We had decided before the observation that I would look at _____ (or use ___ tool to observe your class). What I would like to do is look at the data together and see what we observe."

Step Four: Ask follow-up coaching questions during conversation. As much as possible, do not put your 2 cents worth in the conversation; rely on coaching through paraphrasing moves/questions.

See coaching questions below in Coaching for Equity: Paraphrasing

Step Five: Summarize and Debrief (optional)

Summarize
End the conversation with a decision about what is next in terms of teacher practice and a possible follow-up observation. Often, the observer can use the summarizing and organizing function to summarize what has been said (see **Coaching for Equity: Paraphrasing).** If the conversation is a part of a formal evaluation process, the administrator must translate the objective observation and conversation to the district or state forms.

Discretion is advised at this step of the process as the collaborative process in which you have engaged has the potential to drift toward hierarchical (because of bureaucratic requirements or because you may revert to feedback and telling). Depending on the teacher need and assessment of Glickman types, you may have to engage in a direct-control conversation with a teacher who needs improvement.

Use summarizing statements/questions:

- Let's review the key points of the discussion.
- What next steps are you taking? OR The steps I heard you talk about are______
- What evidence will you look at to ascertain if those next steps are working? OR The evidence I need to collect next time I come is _______
- How does this connect to student learning/equity? I heard you say ___ and that clearly connects to student learning/equity in these ways: _______________

DEBRIEF
Debriefing may or may not feel like the right thing to do. As an administrator, you are model reflection. Thus, depending on the situation, ask for feedback on the structure, tone, and usefulness of conference, using the + and △ (delta=change) format or use a written feedback form for the teacher to reflect on and complete if s/he wishes. However, In some cases, debriefing would not be an appropriate choice.
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- **Set the tone:** Of course, you want the conversation to go as well as possible, so make the teacher feel comfortable. Many administrators recommend having the conference in the teacher's room, or, if it is your office, then probably the administrator sits by the teacher or sits around a table with the teacher. Unless it is a direct control conversation (Glickman) in which you have to set a distinct hierarchical tone with teacher, do not sit behind your desk. Assume best intentions and assume that if the teacher knew to do anything else, s/he would do it. Refrain from making judgments; instead seek reasons behind problems or stated explanations. Probe, but do not prejudge. Use coaching questions. Indeed, if you are practicing having a different type of conversation for the first time, then be transparent and share that with the teacher.

For example, *I am practicing having a different kind of conversation with you about the observation, one that relies on the evidence I collected and analyzed and one in which you decide what your next steps are. I have ideas, of course, but what I am most interested in is your decisions about what you want to do next as a result of analyzing the evidence from the observation. As always, I only observed a slice of your teaching practice, so, if there are particular classroom circumstances with students or lesson, please tell me as we proceed.*

- **General rule of thumb: Teacher should do most of the talking.** Acknowledge ideas, even if you do not totally agree. Typically, do not start conversations with WHY questions. Think time or silence is OK as it allows time for collecting thoughts and thinking about what happened. Use paraphrasing to encourage teacher talk.

- **Language**. In general, avoid "you" statements. Convert to "we" or "I" statements. Use open-ended questions that produce explanations and ideas, not short answers. See advice on question stems that can help to clarify, paraphrase or probe.

- **Body Language**: The process should be viewed in general as a **conversation between professionals.** Be aware of the ways you position yourself as the administrator. Again, for the "hard" conversations, you have to think carefully about what you want to communicate and that may require a different stance, format (directive-control) or positioning (behind your desk).

- **Procedural Advance Organizer** (AO): Explain the purpose and the parts of the post conference and ask for concurrence. You want to be open, but purposeful. Think carefully about the <u>objective of the conversation</u>. You are creating a mini-lesson plan for conducting the conference. Be open, as you are in a classroom, to the student input and changing direction, but don't just drift from one question to another, getting surface responses. Note: *This seems like a lot of planning at first, but as you gain experience, the planning lessens and parts of this become more automatic.*

- Use **teaching and learning language** – naming practices specifically as much as possible. That helps the teacher build structures and you develop a common language for teaching and learning in your school.

- **Remember to put equity at the forefront of the conversation and push the teacher to think about equitable access and even if the observation was not specifically about this.** How does the evidence demonstrate equitable or inequitable practice? How can you direct every part of the conversation toward equity?

Glickman Coaching Stances

You need to consider the teacher with whom you are conferring. Most teachers fall into the direct informational or collaborative approach.

Conversation Approach	Conversation Opening Question Stems
Direct Control (Glickman) Very clear data and presentation of what to do. Highly instructional and direct. This type of conversation is to deliver a message. This is not used in most conversations, but is necessary at times.	● *Based on the analysis of the data, there are some clear patterns in the classroom that require immediate attention if we are to support you to teach this year. In terms of classroom management, I want you to try ________* ● *Based on the analysis of the evidence, I am concerned about ______, and I need to sit with you and plan a lesson so that we can perhaps assist you more in ___________.* ● *I observed that 15 of 20 students were off task each time I did the at task data collection in the 45 minute period. Therefore, I want to work with you on engagement strategies and checking or understanding.*
Directive Informational (Glickman) Instructional (Bloom) When choosing an instructional approach, Bloom says it is a good idea to get permission. It is often useful for new teachers, who often do not have a way to think through the options. This is often an effective approach with novice teachers or veteran teachers who need particular attention	To start any conversation of this type, use some version of this start: *"I observed _______. I would like to give you some options for what I think might be helpful. Is that all right?"* ● *Three students on the left back and two students on right rear were talking or off task the entire period. These are three options I can think of to try: (1)____ (2)____ (3) _____ Do you have another option you think might work better* ● *I observed that you primarily used hand-raising to call on students. You asked __ questions; typically in those questions you did not use think time, and you called on ___ students. One way I think we agreed to in our professional learning was to use equity sticks. In this particular lesson, when could you have used those?* ● *What are some other ways you know to call on students so we have more equitable access to the classroom discourse?*

Collaborative (Glickman) Aka Facilitative (Bloom) Cognitive Coaching (Garmstrom et al.) Teacher who is knowledgeable about practice and for whom the evidence will be supportive.	The purpose of this CONVERSATION is to get the teacher to talk about practice. ● *"I observed that ____________________ occurred. Can we talk about that or does something else in the data stand out as important to talk about?* ● *The data indicate that ______________. Do they correspond to your perception of _____?* ● *What was happening when ________?* ● *I'm curious about this part of the observation (state factual evidence). What were you thinking about when you ___________?* ● *I noticed these two things about student responses: _______________ and ______________ What can you tell me about those students and their learning?* ● *I noticed that you spent most of your time with ____ and _____. I am wondering about that choice…was it purposeful or did it just happen?*
Nondirective (Glickman) Collaborative (Bloom) Cognitive coaching Works at all times toward teacher's self-plan for improvement and relies on teacher input to have conference.	The most important part of this type of conversation is not in the opening question, but in the paraphrasing and mediational questioning that occurs in the conversation to help the teacher develop a self-plan for improvement, relying almost totally on the teacher as lead. This is usually done with sophisticated, strong and often veteran teachers who know teaching practice and language. This relies on listening empathetically and effectively and requires an observer/evaluator who has acquired strength in tools of constructivist listening.

FACILITATIONAL OR INSTRUCTIONAL QUESTIONS

See <u>Coaching for Equity Paraphrasing</u> at end of this document.

Blended coaching requires a dance between three positions to take as a coach: **Consultative, Collaborative and Transformational** using two types of coaching questions: **instructional and facilitative.**

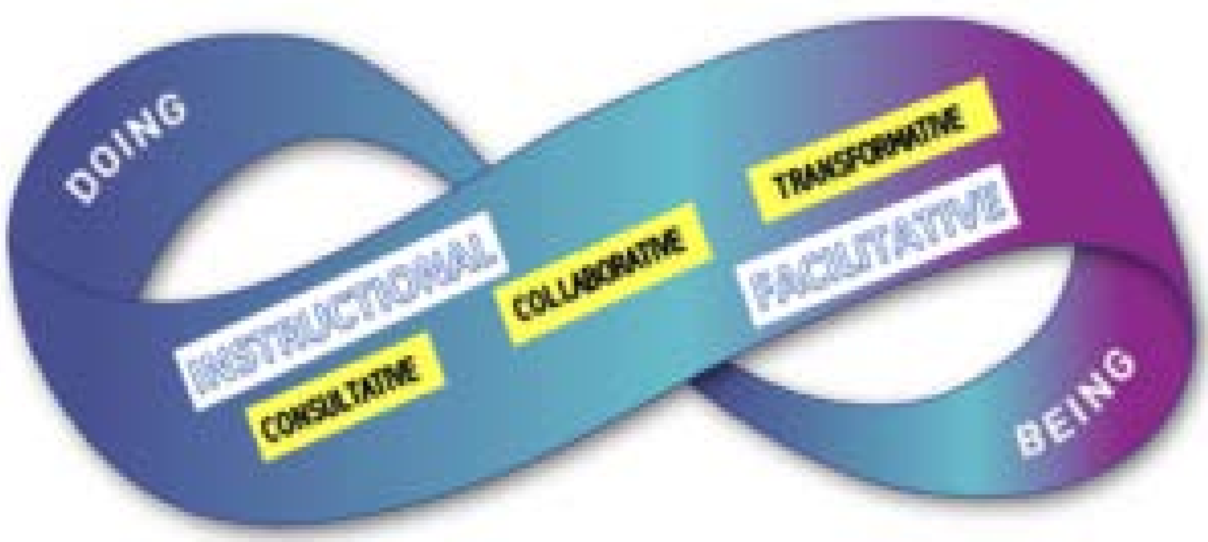
You will need to make a decision about whether the conference needs to be instructional (probably Glickman direct control or direct informational) or facilitative (collaborative or nondirective). In all cases, we do hope that the teachers can come to their own ideas and decisions about changing practice – mainly by the use of facilitative coaching moves of **paraphrasing, clarifying, and mediational questions + summarizing statements**. In general, new teachers need more instruction, but even then, get them to talk about practice. Even when they ask (or nearly plead), be very careful about lots of advice and direction. Remember that, even when something in the classroom has made you upset –most of the time, the teacher is alone in the classroom and has to solve his/her own problems. Thus, it is important, if possible, that the teacher solve his or her own problems by thinking through them with you. If this requires more instruction on your part because the teacher does not really know what to do, get permission to be instructional. As much as possible navigate the conversation back to facilitating the thinking of the teacher.

Instructional to Facilitative Coaching

Bloom, G., Castagna, C.L., Moir, E., & Warren, B. (2005). *Blended coaching: Skills and strategies to support principal development.* Thousand Oaks, CA.: Corwin Press

Although the book is useful for those coaching principals, the coaching philosophy applies to coaching any adult.

The image is a mobius strip chosen to exemplify the ways that effective conversations rely on the coach's ability to move easily among the approaches to support the person who is coached. At times, like Glickman, the principal has to be more instructional and less facilitative (or using cognitive coaching). The goal is always to ensure the coachee starts to think for herself or himself about how to transform his or her practice.



Adapted from Blended Coaching

PROECT I⁴ COACHING FOR EQUITY

USING PARAPHRASING IN MULTIPLE WAYS

Adapted from Lipton, Wellman & Humbard, 2003 and Principal Leadership Institute, UC Berkeley

CRITERIA FOR STRONG PARAPHRASING

Captures the essence of the message from coachee
Reflects the essence in voice tone and gestures
Names the speaker's content, emotions, and frames a logical level for addressing the content
Reflects the speaker's thinking back to the speaker for further consideration
Is shorter, but uses some of the language of the original statement
Seeks understanding, clarity and alignment

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">TYPES OF PARAPHRASING</th></tr>
<tr><th>ACKNOWLEDGING & CLARIFYING</th><th>SUMMARIZING & ORGANIZING</th><th>SHIFTING LEVEL OF ABSTRACTION</th></tr>
<tr><td>By restating the essence of a statement, the coach paraphrases in order to identify and calibrate content and emotions.</td><td>By summarizing and organizing, the coach's paraphrases the coachee's responses to reshape thinking and separate jumbled issues.</td><td>By shifting the level of abstraction "up", the coach illuminates other ideas and supports the coachee to think at a deeper level. When shifting "down", the coach supports coachee to be more precise.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">COACHING QUESTION STEMS</th></tr>
<tr><td>• So, you're feeling ___________.
• You seem to noticing that __________.
• In other words, you are saying that ____.
• Hmm, you're suggesting that ______.</td><td>• There seem to be two issues here: _____ and ____
• On the one hand, it seems you are saying that _____. On the other hand, there might be _________ to think about.
• For you then, several themes are emerging: _____, _____ and _____
• It seems you are considering this sequence or hierarchy: ____________</td><td>So, a(n) ______ for you might be ________.

Shifting up
Shifting down
category
example
belief
non-example
assumption
strategy
goal
choice
intention
action

option</td></tr>
</table>